Los Angeles Times

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Photographs by ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

MOURNERS hold a vigil Monday for the 11 victims of Saturday's mass shooting at Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park.

HINTS OF A LONELY, EMPTY LIFE

Investigators wonder if jealous rage is what finally drove Huu Can Tran over the edge.

By Noah Goldberg, Matthew Ormseth and Alene Tchekmedyian

Two weeks before he went on a shooting rampage at a dance studio in Monterey Park, Huu Can Tran showed up in the lobby of a police station 80 miles away to report some far-fetched allegations.

The 72-year-old man told police in Hemet, a small city east of Los Angeles where he lived in a trailer park, that family members had tried to poison him many years earlier. He also claimed to have been the victim of fraud and theft, according to a police account of the meetings. He promised to return with evidence but never did.

The odd visits, which he made two days apart earlier this month, offer a glimpse into the troubled mind of the man who opened fire on a festive crowd at Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park on the eve of the Lunar New Year, killing 11 people and wounding nine others. After the shooting, Tran drove to another studio nearby, seemingly intent on continuing his killing rampage, but a man there wrested away his weapon and chased him off.

On Monday investigators continued to work to try to understand what pushed Tran to such violence, zeroing in on his frequent attendance at the two dance studios and the possibility he was driven by jealousy or some other personal resentment, according to law enforcement sources.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna offered a few new details Monday about the dark world Tran inhabited. During a search of his home Sunday night in a trailer park in Hemet, Luna said police found hundreds of rounds of ammunition and uncovered evidence Tran was "manufacturing homemade firearm suppressors," which muffle the sound of a weapon firing. Tran, he added, appeared to

[See **Gunman,** A6]

Firearms' origins are part of the puzzle for police

By Libor Jany, James Queally and Richard Winton

As familiar as mass shootings have become, the gunman's choice of weapon in the attack Saturday night that left 11 people dead and nine injured in Monterey Park stands out.

Instead of the assault-style rifles that have surfaced in recent high-casualty shootings, authorities say, Huu Can Tran carried a 9-millimeter MAC-10 — a relic by today's standards — when he walked into a dance hall about 10:20 p.m. and began spraying bullets as frightened patrons ducked for cover.

Authorities recovered at least 42 spent shell casings from the scene.

At a news conference Monday afternoon, Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said the weapon was wrested from Tran at a dance club in Alhambra and provided law enforcement with the first clues to the gunman's identity.

[See **Weapons,** A7]

United in a love of dance

The sanctuary of a Monterey Park ballroom is shattered

THE VICTIMS included Asian immigrants for whom the dance studio was a social lifeline and a place to celebrate holidays and catch up with friends.

By Summer Lin, Jonah Valdez, Rebecca Ellis, Brittny Mejia and Marisa Gerber

They were united in life by a love of movement — of sashays and sways and spins on the dance floor — and again in death by the devastating reality that they took their final breaths in the place they had long considered a sanctuary.

Among the 11 victims killed in the weekend massacre at Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park — including one person who later died in a hospital — were a beloved aunt with a flair for fashion, a father of two who loved to sing and a manager whose effervescent energy filled the studio.

They were all in their 50s, 60s and 70s, according to the Los Angeles County coroner.

Four were identified Monday by officials: My Nhan, 65; Lilan Li, 63; Xiujuan Yu, 57; and Valentino Alvero, 68. Family and friends identified two others

[See **Victims,** A6]

Workers try to carry on
A grim start to Lunar New Year brings a strange mix of sentiments to neighboring businesses. **A7**

Mourners gather at vigil
More than 100 people remember 11 victims in a sober contrast to new year's celebrations. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

The oldest mass shooter
At 72 years old, Huu Can Tran was the oldest to carry out such an attack in U.S. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

7 fatally shot near Half Moon Bay

Some of the slayings were witnessed by children, officials say. A resident of the rural enclave is in custody.

By Salvador Hernandez, Summer Lin, Susanne Rust and Brittny Mejia

HALF MOON BAY, Calif. — At least seven people were killed in a pair of related shootings that have rocked the beachside community of Half Moon Bay, an act of violence that comes just two days after 11 people were killed in another mass shooting in Monterey Park.

A 67-year-old resident of the community is accused of opening fire at two rural locations about a mile distant, shooting some of the victims in front of children who lived nearby and had recently been released from school.

"This kind of shooting is horrific; it's a tragedy we hear about too often," San Mateo County Sheriff Christina Corpus said. "For children to witness this is unspeakable."

The suspect, believed to be a worker at one of the nearby farms or nurseries, was arrested about two hours after the shootings while sitting in a parked car at a sheriff's substation.

The victims are also believed to be workers at nearby farms, officials said.

Deputies with the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office first found four victims shot to death in the 12700 block of San Mateo Road in an unincorporated area of the county just before 2:30 p.m.

A fifth victim was also found in the area and taken to Stanford Medical Center with life-threatening injuries, the Sheriff's Office said.

Minutes later, in an area about a mile away, in the 2100 block of Cabrillo Highway, deputies found three more victims dead of apparent gunshot wounds.

Corpus said the suspect was believed to have driven

[See **Half Moon,** A9]

COLUMN ONE

Will their friendship pay off for L.A.?

Bass' bipartisan rapport with McCarthy may aid her bid for federal funding

TOM WILLIAMS CQ-Roll Call

KEVIN McCARTHY and Karen Bass attend an event at the Capitol in 2019. The speaker, left, and the L.A. mayor are longtime friends.

By Melanie Mason and Benjamin Oreskes reporting from Washington

Several days after the November election, two Californians in political limbo chatted on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Bakersfield Rep. Kevin McCarthy was waiting on a handful of uncalled congressional races to determine whether his wish for a GOP majority, and eventually, the speaker's gavel, would come true. At that moment, however, another contest was on his mind.

"He asked me if I had won" the mayoral election, "and I told him, 'Not yet,' " recalled Karen Bass, who had returned to Washington to pack up her condo, while back in Los Angeles

[See **Politicos,** A12]

Annual COVID shots proposed
FDA wants to simplify the process with once-a-year vaccinations against the mutating virus. **PERSPECTIVES, A2**

Moreno decides to retain Angels
Months after putting the team up for sale, the owner changes his mind amid potential bids due next month. **SPORTS, B10**

Far right throws fit over M&M's
Tucker Carlson has sunk a makeover that Mars Wrigley gave the brand, Michael Hiltzik writes. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather
Lots of sunshine.
L.A. Basin: 64/41. **B6**

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VISIT…

Bills aim to bar insurrectionists from holding public office

Democrats in several states pitch legislation in response to recent election, prompting some GOP pushback.

By Maysoon Khan

ALBANY, N.Y. — Democratic lawmakers in a handful of states are trying to send a message two years after the attack on the U.S. Capitol: Those who engage in an attempted overthrow of the government shouldn't be allowed to run it.

New York, Connecticut and Virginia are among states where proposed legislation would prohibit anyone convicted of participating in an insurrection from holding public office or a position of public trust, such as becoming a police officer.

While the bills vary in scope, their aim is similar.

"If you've tried to take down our government through violent means, in no way should you be part of it," New York state Sen. Brad Hoylman-Sigal said.

He is sponsoring a bill that would bar people convicted of engaging in an insurrection or rebellion against the U.S. from holding civil office, meaning that they would not be able to serve as a judge or member of the Legislature.

Hoylman-Sigal said he introduced the bill this year because he saw more people who were involved in the riot in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, running for office last year.

He described the assault on the Capitol as "a real attack on the foundations of our free and fair democracy and the values which enable that to persist."

A Virginia lawmaker introduced a bill this month, on the second anniversary of the Capitol riot, that would prohibit anyone convicted of a felony related to an attempted insurrection or riot from serving in positions of public trust, including those involving policymaking, law enforcement, safety, education or health.

A Connecticut bill would prohibit people convicted of sedition, rebellion, insurrection or a felony related to one of those acts from running for or holding public office. State Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff, who introduced the measure, told the Associated Press that he wants the legislation eventually to bar them from holding state or municipal jobs.

The legislation in the states comes after the U.S. House Jan. 6 committee's final report, which found that former President Trump criminally engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election and failed to take action to stop his supporters from attacking the Capitol.

The committee's recently concluded work may have provided another springboard for lawmakers to act and propose ways to hold people accountable, said Victoria Bassetti, a senior policy advisor at States United Democracy Center, a nonpartisan organization that advocates for fair elections.

Some Republicans say the legislation is unnecessary.

In New York, Republican Assemblyman Will Barclay, the minority leader, called the bill there a "political statement," saying it is "more political than it is a concern about public policy."

He said that existing rules already apply to people in certain positions who are convicted of crimes and that those laws "should be sufficient."

The legislation is another example of how the Capitol riot has become a political Rorschach test in the country.

Many Republicans refuse to see the attempt to violently halt the presidential certification — which was based on lies that the 2020 election was stolen — as an insurrection, while a strong majority of the party continues to believe that President Biden was not legitimately elected. Even students are being taught different versions of the attack, depending on whether they live in more conservative or liberal parts of the nation.

The opposing realities came into sharp focus this month in Pennsylvania during a fraught exchange between two lawmakers.

In a committee hearing, Republican state Sen. Cris Dush slammed his gavel as he ruled Democratic state Sen. Amanda Cappelletti out of order after she described the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 as "the site of an insurrection."

"Insurrection, nobody has been charged with that," Dush said. "There's not been a single charge against any of those people as insurrectionists. In this committee, we are not using that term."

Julio Cortez Associated Press

RIOTERS LOYAL to former President Trump clash with U.S. Capitol police during the siege of Jan. 6, 2021. Many Republicans refuse to see the violent attempt to stop the presidential certification as an insurrection.

> 'If you've tried to take down our government through violent means, in no way should you be part of it.'
>
> — Brad Hoylman-Sigal, New York state senator, on a bill to ban insurrectionists

Nearly 1,000 people have been charged in the Capitol riot with federal crimes, with about half of them pleading guilty to riot-related charges and more than three dozen convicted at trial. The charges include misdemeanors for those accused of entering the Capitol illegally but not participating in violence as well as felony seditious conspiracy for far-right extremist group members accused of plotting to stop the transfer of presidential power.

In November, two leaders of the Oath Keepers extremist group were convicted of seditious conspiracy for what prosecutors alleged was a weeks-long plot to use force to keep Trump in office. Leaders of the Proud Boys and additional members of the Oath Keepers are currently standing trial on the sedition charge, which carries a sentence of up to 20 years behind bars.

Weeks after the testy committee exchange in Pennsylvania, Cappelletti told the Associated Press that it was important to make sure people understand that the attack on the Capitol was an insurrection.

"These are factually correct things," she said. "That doesn't mean that we can't disagree politically about policy or other things, but we can acknowledge that that happened and start to figure out how we move forward to work together to build up that public trust again."

Dush remained steadfast in his view that what unfolded on Jan. 6 was not an insurrection.

"If there had been some sort of plot for an insurrection, that would've come apart quite quickly after the government got the control back," he said in a phone interview.

There have been some earlier attempts to prevent certain officials from either running for or holding office.

A New Hampshire bill that would have barred anyone who participates in an insurrection or rebellion from holding office in the state died last year.

Also last year, groups brought lawsuits under a rarely cited section of the 14th Amendment dealing with insurrection. They sought to disqualify a handful of U.S. House members from seeking reelection for events surrounding the Jan. 6 riot.

In New Mexico, a state court in September disqualified a rural county commissioner from holding public office for engaging in the Capitol insurrection. Couy Griffin had been convicted in federal court of a misdemeanor for entering the Capitol grounds, without going inside the building. He was sentenced to 14 days and given credit for time served.

The judge permanently barred Griffin, who was then an elected commissioner from Otero County, from federal and local public office.

In West Virginia, a former state lawmaker who pleaded guilty to a felony — civil disorder — for participating in the riot and who served time announced this month that he was running for Congress.

"We have to really rid ourselves of those who would take down our government," said Duff, the Connecticut lawmaker. "There's no place for any of them to be [in] any kind of elected or appointed officer."

Khan writes for the Associated Press.

Rogelio V. Solis Associated Press

FDA officials say moving to an annual schedule would make it easier to promote vaccination campaigns.

Annual COVID shots proposed

The FDA wants to simplify the process with once-a-year vaccinations against the mutating virus.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. health officials want to make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the annual flu shot.

The Food and Drug Administration on Monday proposed a simplified approach for future vaccination efforts, allowing most adults and children to get a once-a-year shot to protect against the mutating coronavirus.

This means Americans would no longer have to keep track of how many shots they've received or how many months it's been since their last booster.

The proposal comes as boosters have become a hard sell. While more than 80% of the U.S. population has had at least one vaccine dose, only about 16% of those eligible have received the latest Omicron-targeting boosters that became available in September.

The FDA will ask its panel of outside vaccine experts to weigh in at a meeting Thursday. The agency is expected to take their advice into consideration while deciding future vaccine requirements for vaccine makers.

In documents posted online, FDA scientists say many Americans now have "sufficient preexisting immunity" against the coronavirus because of vaccination, infection or a combination of the two. That base line of protection should be enough to move to an annual booster against the latest strains in circulation and make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the yearly flu shot, according to the agency.

For adults with weakened immune systems and for very small children, a two-dose combination may be needed for protection. FDA scientists and vaccine companies would study vaccination, infection rates and other data to decide who should receive a single shot versus a two-dose series.

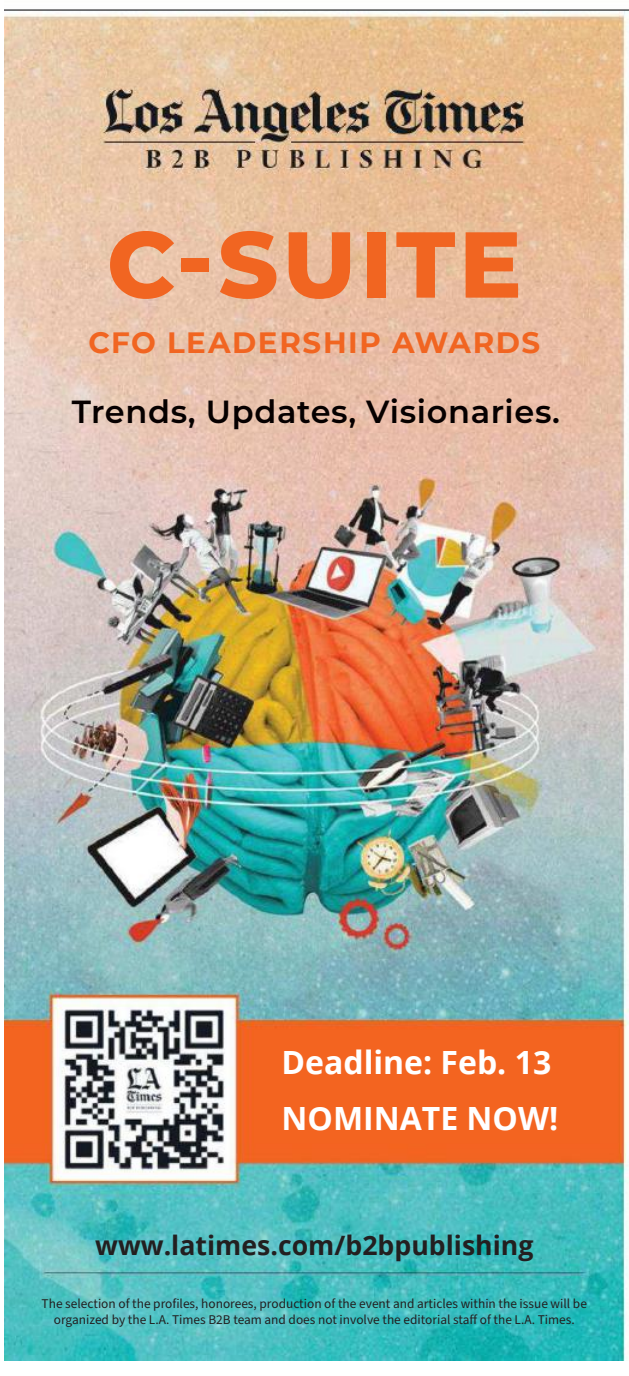
FDA will also seek input on switching all vaccines to target the same strains. That step would be needed to make the shots interchangeable, doing away with the current complicated system of primary vaccinations and boosters.

The initial shots from Pfizer and Moderna — called the primary series — target the strain of the virus that emerged in 2020 and quickly swept across the world. The updated bivalent boosters launched last fall were tweaked to target Omicron relatives that had been dominant, along with the original strain.

Under the FDA's proposal, the agency, independent experts and manufacturers would decide annually on which strains to target by the early summer, allowing several months to produce and launch updated shots before the fall. That's roughly the same approach long used to select the strains for the annual flu shot.

Ultimately, FDA officials say, moving to an annual schedule would make it easier to promote future vaccination campaigns, which could ultimately boost vaccination rates nationwide.

The original two-dose COVID shots have offered strong protection against severe disease and death no matter the variant, but protection against mild infection wanes. Experts continue to debate whether the latest round of boosters significantly enhanced protection, particularly for younger, healthy Americans.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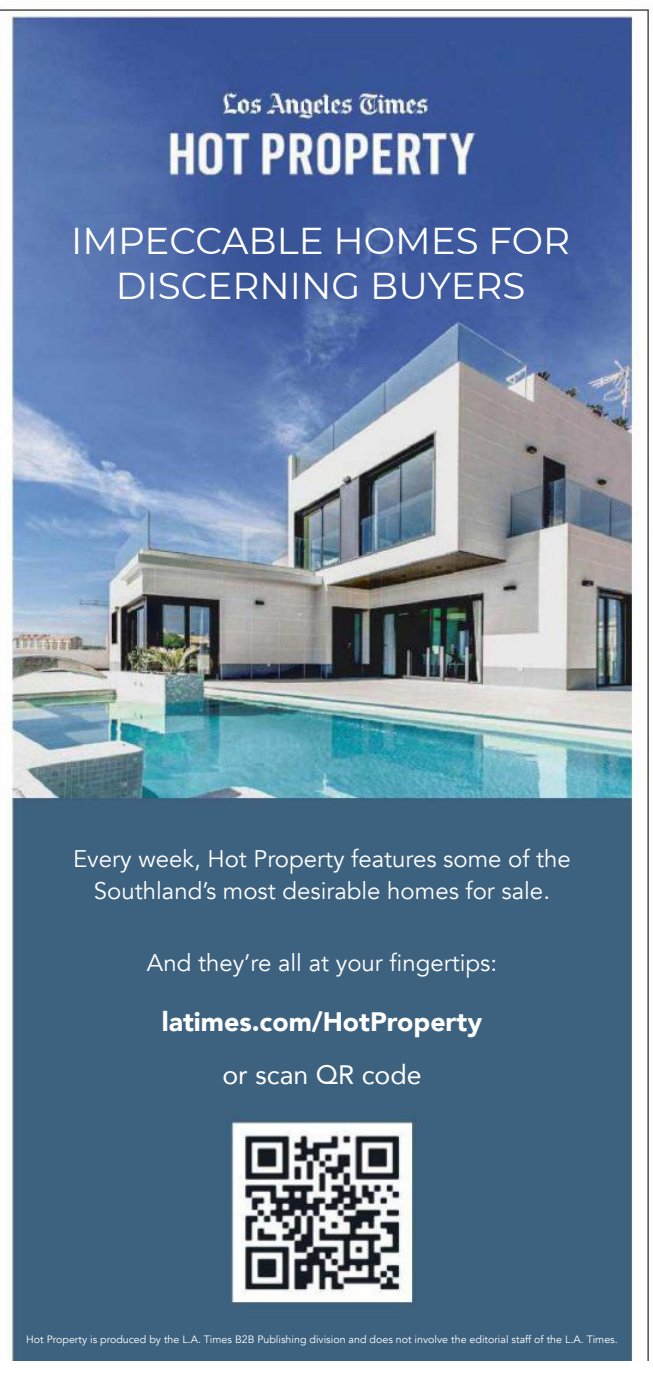
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Poland to ask Germany for tank approval

The government in Warsaw wants to speed up the process of supplying Ukraine with military aid.

By Monika Scislowska

WARSAW — Poland said Monday that it would ask Berlin for permission to send German-built Leopard tanks to Ukraine, as the government in Warsaw pushes its Western allies to move faster on supplying Kyiv with more military hardware to repel Russia's invasion.

Germany has hesitated over sending tanks to Ukraine. But Polish officials took heart from German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock's remarks Sunday that Berlin wouldn't seek to stop Poland from providing Leopard 2 battle tanks to Kyiv.

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki didn't specify at a news conference when the request would be made. He said Poland was building a coalition of nations ready to send German-made Leopards to Ukraine.

Poland needs the consent of Germany, which builds the tanks, to send them to a non-NATO country. But even if Germany withholds its approval, Warsaw will make its own decisions, Morawiecki said.

Ukraine says tanks — and especially the Leopards — are vital to its war effort. Both sides' battlefield positions are mostly deadlocked during winter, with new ground offensives expected in the spring. Russia's forces are much larger than Ukraine's, so Kyiv wants to gain an advantage in weaponry and fuller backing from its Western allies.

Poland has become a leading advocate in the European Union for giving Ukraine the military aid that could help it prevail over the Kremlin's invading forces 11 months after the war started. Germany's hesitation has drawn criticism, particularly from Poland and the Baltic countries on the eastern flank of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that feel especially threatened by Russia.

Berlin, despite providing substantial aid, has been criticized for dragging its feet on providing military hardware.

German government spokesman Steffen Hebestreit said Monday that it was important for Germany not to take a "reckless" step that might be regretted afterward, adding that a decision would not be rushed.

"These are hard questions of life and death," he added. "We have to ask what this means for the defense of our own country."

Pressed on how long a decision on sending tanks might take, Hebestreit said: "I assume that it's not a question of months now."

Michael Sohn Associated Press

UKRAINE says tanks, especially the German-built Leopard 2, are essential in defending against Russia.

Previously, Polish officials have indicated that Finland and Denmark were ready to join Poland in sending Leopards to Ukraine. Britain has pledged to send some of its Challenger tanks. French President Emmanuel Macron said Sunday that he had asked his defense minister to "work on" the possibility of sending Leclerc battle tanks to Ukraine.

But Macron said a decision hinged on three criteria that have also weighed on the minds of other Western leaders: that sharing the equipment doesn't lead to an escalation of the conflict, that it would provide efficient and workable help when training time is taken into account and that it wouldn't weaken his country's own military.

Morawiecki said that although Poland intended to ask Germany for permission to send Leopard tanks to Ukraine, the request was "a secondary matter" as a group of EU countries looked at how to help Kyiv.

"Naturally, these are not easy talks, but we will be taking efforts to break this barrier of unwillingness in various countries," he said.

Baerbock, Germany's top diplomat, told French television channel LCI on Sunday that Poland hasn't formally asked for Berlin's approval to send Leopards, but added: "If we were asked, we would not stand in the way."

Regarding Baerbock's comments, Morawiecki said that "exerting pressure makes sense" and that her words are a "spark of hope" that Germany may even take part in the coalition.

According to Morawiecki, Germany has "more than 350 active Leopards and about 200 in storage."

Poland wants to send a company of Leopard tanks, which means 14 of them, but they would barely make an impression in a war that involves thousands of tanks. If other countries contribute, Warsaw reckons, the tank detachment could grow to a much bigger brigade size.

Berlin has shown caution at each step of increasing its aid to Ukraine, a hesitancy seen as rooted in its history and political culture.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that the latest developments on sending European tanks to Ukraine "signaled increasing nervousness among members of the alliance."

Ukraine's supporters pledged billions of dollars in military aid to Ukraine during a meeting at Ramstein Air Base in Germany on Friday. International defense leaders discussed Ukraine's urgent request for the Leopard 2 tanks, and the failure to work out an agreement overshadowed the new commitments.

In Brussels, EU foreign ministers gave the green light Monday to a further $543-million package of military support for Ukraine, as well as funding for a training mission the bloc has set up for the country's troops.

The money would be used to reimburse EU countries for weapons and ammunition they supply Ukraine. An additional $49 million will pay for the 27-nation bloc's military training mission this year.

It brings the total amount of money provided to Ukraine from the EU fund to about $3.9 billion.

Moscow, in response to the pledges of sophisticated Western weapons for Kyiv's military, has stepped up its warnings that escalation risks catastrophe.

"We have said on numerous occasions that escalation is the most dangerous path, and the consequences may be unpredictable," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said. "Our signals are not listened to, and Russia's adversaries keep raising the stakes."

The Kremlin's forces have kept up their bombardments of Ukrainian areas.

Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Sinegubov said Monday that Russian forces shelled several towns and villages in the northeastern region over the previous 24 hours, killing a 67-year-old woman and leaving another resident wounded.

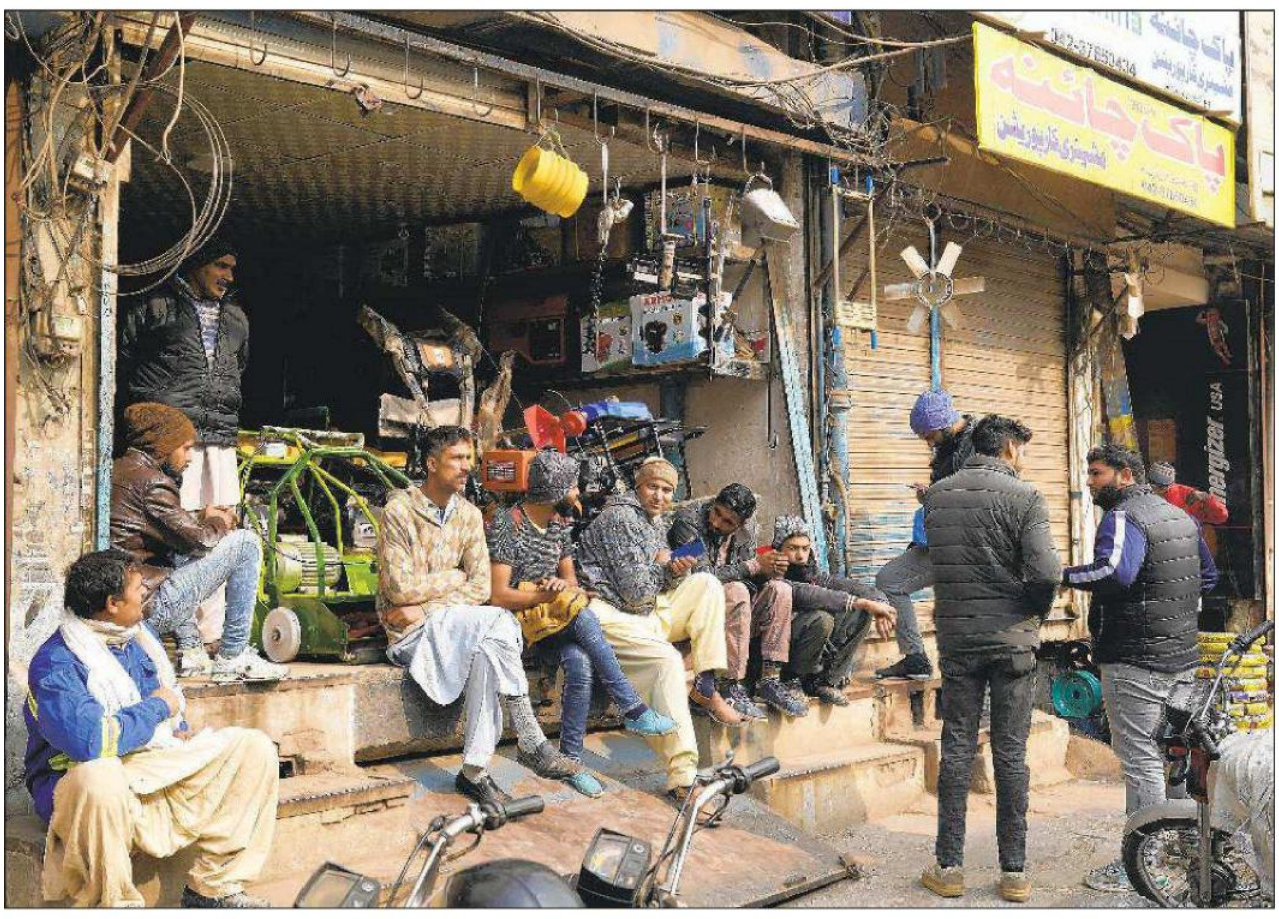
Neither side shows signs of backing down as the war nears the one-year mark.

The Kremlin appears to be keeping its options open on mobilizing more soldiers. Russian authorities declared the mobilization of an additional 300,000 reservists complete in late October. However, some Russian lawyers and rights groups pointed out that President Vladimir Putin's mobilization decree remains in effect until another presidential decree is issued to formally end the action.

Peskov said Monday that although the decreed number of reservists had been mobilized, the decree remained in force because it included "other measures needed to ensure the fulfillment of tasks by the military." He didn't elaborate.

Ukrainian officials have repeatedly warned about Russia's plans to continue mobilizing more troops.

Scislowska writes for the Associated Press.



K.M. Chaudary Associated Press

SHOPKEEPERS and workers wait for the power to come back on in Lahore, Pakistan. Many major cities, including the capital, as well as remote towns and villages were without electricity for more than 12 hours.

Pakistan's power grid fails after energy-saving measure goes awry

Nationwide outage left many without drinking water. Schools and hospitals had no electricity.

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Most of Pakistan was left without power Monday as an energy-saving measure by the government backfired. The outage spread panic and raised questions about the cash-strapped government's handling of the country's economic crisis.

Electricity was turned off across Pakistan during low-usage hours overnight to conserve fuel across the country, officials said, leaving technicians unable to boot up the system all at once after daybreak. The outage was reminiscent of a massive blackout in January 2021, attributed at the time to a technical fault in the country's power generation and distribution system.

Many major cities, including the capital, Islamabad, and remote towns and villages across Pakistan were without electricity for more than 12 hours. As the electrical failure continued into Monday night, authorities deployed additional police at markets around the country to provide security.

Officials announced late Monday that power was restored in many cities, 15 hours after the outage was reported.

Earlier, the nationwide breakdown left many in this country of some 230 million people without drinking water since pumps are powered by electricity. Schools, hospitals, factories and shops were without power amid the harsh winter weather.

Energy Minister Khurram Dastgir told local media Monday that engineers were working to restore the power supply across the country and tried to reassure the nation that power would be fully restored within the next 12 hours.

According to the minister, during winter, electricity usage typically goes down overnight — unlike summer months when Pakistanis turn to air conditioning for a respite from the heat.

"As an economic measure, we temporarily shut down our power-generation systems" Sunday night, Dastgir said.

When engineers tried to turn the systems back on, a "fluctuation in voltage" was observed, which "forced engineers to shut down the power grid" stations one by one, he added.

He insisted that the outage did not constitute a major crisis and that electricity was being restored in phases. In many places and key businesses and institutions, including hospitals, military and government facilities, backup generators kicked in.

By late afternoon Monday, Dastgir told reporters at another news conference that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif had ordered an investigation into the outage.

"We are hoping that the supply of electricity will be fully restored tonight," Dastgir said.

Before midnight, power was back in Karachi, the country's largest city and economic hub, and in many other major cities including Rawalpindi, Quetta, Peshawar and Lahore, the capital of Punjab province in the country's east.

In Lahore, a closing notice was posted on Orange Line metro stations, with rail workers guarding the sites and trains parked on the rails. It was unknown when the metro system would be running again.

Imran Rana, a spokesman for Karachi's power-supply company, said the government's priority was to "restore power to strategic facilities, including hospitals" and airports.

Internet-access advocacy group NetBlocks.org said network data showed a significant decline in internet access in Pakistan that was attributed to the nationwide power outage. It said metrics indicated that connectivity was at 60% of ordinary levels as many users struggled to get online Monday.

Pakistan gets at least 60% of its electricity from fossil fuels, while nearly 27% of the electricity is generated by hydropower. The contribution of nuclear and solar power to the nation's grid is about 10%.

Pakistan is grappling with one of the country's worst economic crises in recent years amid dwindling foreign-exchange reserves. This compelled the government this month to order shopping malls and markets closed by 8:30 p.m. to conserve energy.

Talks are underway with the International Monetary Fund to soften some conditions of Pakistan's $6-billion bailout, which the government thinks will increase inflation. The IMF released the last crucial tranche of $1.1 billion to Islamabad in August.

Since then, talks between the two parties have deadlocked because of Pakistan's reluctance to impose new tax measures.

Blinken steps into volatile conflict in Caucasus region

U.S. demands that Azerbaijan open a disputed corridor for Armenia to access Nagorno-Karabakh.

By Tracy Wilkinson

WASHINGTON — Wading into a festering conflict in the volatile Caucasus region, the United States' top diplomat on Monday demanded that Azerbaijan open a disputed corridor to Armenia before its closure results in a humanitarian disaster.

The Lachin Corridor is the only land link between Armenia and the breakaway enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is within Azerbaijan but populated by ethnic Armenians.

The two countries have frequently clashed over the territory; a war two years ago killed nearly 7,000 soldiers and displaced tens of thousands of civilians in a matter of weeks.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken telephoned Azerbaijan's president, Ilham Aliyev, to urge "the immediate reopening" of the four-mile corridor to commercial traffic, spokesman Ned Price said.

"He underscored that the risk of a humanitarian crisis ... undermined prospects for peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan," Price said.

The Biden administration is under pressure from some members of Congress who have voiced support for Armenian causes, such as labeling the early 20th century slaughter of Armenians under the Ottoman Empire a genocide.

In a letter to Blinken 11 days ago, Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, accused Azerbaijan of blocking the movement of 120,000 Nagorno-Karabakh residents, "effectively holding them hostages."

"This blockade is imposing devastation on an already vulnerable region," Menendez wrote, by creating severe food and medicine shortages over the last month.

The letter was co-signed by Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Azerbaijan maintains that transit is being disrupted by protesters who are angry over illegal mining in the area, purportedly by Armenians. But Menendez, other U.S. and European officials and pro-Armenia activists in the U.S. say the blame lies with Aliyev.

The truce in late 2020 was brokered in large part by Russia, which deployed a contingent of troops to keep the peace. However, by most accounts, they have not acted to open the corridor, leading to questions about their role. Some observers think the war in Ukraine has sapped Russia's willingness to provide robust monitoring in Azerbaijan and Armenia.

But officials in the U.S. and in Europe worry that Azerbaijan and Armenia could easily slip back into armed conflict, which could spark a wider war.

Russia was traditionally an ally of Armenia, and Azerbaijan is backed by North Atlantic Treaty Organization member Turkey. As a further complication, the U.S. is at odds with Turkey on several issues, including NATO expansion and fighter jets that Ankara wants to purchase; additionally, Turkey has become increasingly friendly with Moscow.

Blinken met with the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan in September on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly. A brief spasm of fighting had broken out. But the meeting apparently produced little more than a pledge to work for peace, without a road map for doing so.

Schiff, Swalwell nominations set up fight in House

By Nolan D. McCaskill

WASHINGTON — House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries renominated two California Democrats to serve on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, setting up a clash with Speaker Kevin McCarthy over committee assignments he has vowed to block.

In the last Congress, Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D-Burbank) chaired the committee, and Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-Dublin) led its Intelligence Modernization and Readiness Subcommittee, but McCarthy has long signaled that Schiff, Swalwell and Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) would lose their committee assignments if he became speaker.

His threat followed moves by his predecessor, Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco), Democrats and a few Republicans to strip Reps. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) and Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.) of their committee assignments when Democrats were in control.

"It is my understanding that you intend to break with the longstanding House tradition of deference to the minority party Intelligence Committee recommendations and deny seats to Ranking Member Schiff and Representative Swalwell," Jeffries wrote in a letter to McCarthy over the weekend. "The denial of seats to duly elected Members of the House Democratic Caucus runs counter to the serious and sober mission of the Intelligence Committee."

Jeffries (D-N.Y) noted Greene and Gosar were removed from their committee assignments in the last Congress "after a bipartisan vote of the House found them unfit to serve on standing committees for directly inciting violence against their colleagues."

Greene was removed from her committee assignments in 2021 over racist rhetoric and supporting violence against Democrats. Gosar faced punishment in November 2021 after posting, and later deleting, a cartoon video with his face superimposed on a character who kills someone with Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's (D-N.Y.) face and wields swords against President Biden.

"It does not serve as precedent or justification for the removal of Representatives Schiff and Swalwell, given that they have never exhibited violent thoughts or behavior," Jeffries said.

McCarthy (R-Bakersfield) has accused Schiff, the lead manager during the first impeachment of President Trump, of lying to the public about certain details related to a whistleblower report that triggered the investigation, and of dismissing emails found on a laptop allegedly owned by Hunter Biden as a Russian ploy.

McCarthy has argued that Swalwell couldn't get a security clearance in the private sector following a report that he was targeted by a suspected Chinese spy, with whom he later cut ties.

In a letter to the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, Schiff wrote that "it is not for Kevin McCarthy to decide to remove Members from Committees based on smears and falsehoods. Whether that means Ilhan Omar or Eric Swalwell or myself, there is no basis for his threatened retaliation other than placating the most extreme members of his party."

In a separate letter, Swalwell similarly said it "is not for the Speaker to decide to remove Members from committees based on fabricated stories or political revenge."

McCarthy's office declined to comment Monday.

On Monday evening, McCarthy announced the GOP members who will serve on the Intelligence Committee, including the newly added Rep. Mike Garcia (R-Santa Clarita.) The speaker gave no indication about when he would announce his decision on the panel's Democratic members.

McCarthy has the authority to reject Democrats nominated to serve on the Intelligence panel because the speaker has the final say over membership of select committees.

Removing Omar from the House Foreign Affairs Committee would require a full floor vote. Threats to remove Omar from the panel followed antisemitic comments she made and later apologized for.

Greene will serve on the Homeland Security Committee, Gosar will serve on the Natural Resources Committee, and both will have a seat on the Oversight and Accountability Committee.

Greene became a top ally of McCarthy and pushed her conservative colleagues in the House Freedom Caucus to support his bid for speaker, which ultimately required 15 votes over four days. Gosar began voting for McCarthy on the 12th ballot.

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Man who put feet on Pelosi's desk is guilty in Jan. 6 verdict

'I was just in the moment,' Arkansas resident says of time in speaker's office during Capitol riot.

By Michael Kunzelman

Saul Loeb AFP/Getty Images

IN ONE of the more memorable photos from the Jan. 6 insurrection, Richard Barnett poses in the office of Speaker Nancy Pelosi after entering the Capitol.

WASHINGTON — An Arkansas man who propped his feet on a desk in then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office during the U.S. Capitol riot was convicted on Monday of joining a mob's attack on the building two years ago.

A jury deliberated for about two hours before unanimously convicting Richard "Bigo" Barnett on all eight counts, including felony charges of civil disorder and obstruction of an official proceeding.

Barnett lounging at a desk in Pelosi's office made him one of the most memorable figures from the riot on Jan. 6, 2021, the day when Congress convened a joint session to certify President Biden's electoral victory.

U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper is scheduled to sentence Barnett on May 3. The judge agreed to let Barnett remain free on certain conditions until his sentencing.

Outside the courthouse after the verdict, Barnett vowed to appeal his conviction, calling it an injustice. He noted that the judge had rejected his request to move his trial from Washington to Arkansas.

"This is not a jury of my peers," he told reporters.

Prosecutors asked the judge to jail Barnett while he awaits sentencing. Justice Department prosecutor Alison Prout said the jury concluded that Barnett took a weapon into Pelosi's office.

"We can only imagine what would have happened if [Pelosi] had been there at the time," Prout said.

Barnett, 62, testified on Thursday that he was looking for a bathroom in the Capitol when he unwittingly entered Pelosi's office and encountered two news photographers. He said one of the photographers told him to "act natural," so he leaned back in a chair and flung his legs onto the desk.

"Did it dawn on you that what you were doing could cause some trouble?" defense attorney Joseph McBride asked Barnett.

"I was just in the moment," Barnett replied. "I'm just kind of going with the flow at this point."

Barnett's decision to testify was "unequivocally the right one," his lawyer told reporters after the verdict.

"He had a story that needed to be told," McBride said. "People needed to know why he came here, what his intentions were and what he did while he was here."

Prosecutors said Barnett had a stun gun tucked into his pants when he stormed the Capitol and invaded Pelosi's office. Barnett was convicted of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon — a stun gun with spikes concealed within a collapsible walking stick.

Barnett took a piece of her mail and left behind a note that said, "Nancy, Bigo was here," punctuating the message with a sexist expletive. The jury convicted him of a theft charge for taking the envelope from Pelosi's office.

Before leaving Capitol grounds, Barnett used a bullhorn to give a speech to the crowd, shouting, "We took back our house, and I took Nancy Pelosi's office!" according to prosecutors.

Videos support Barnett's testimony that a crowd pushed him into the Capitol as he approached an entrance, causing him to briefly fall to his knees as he crossed the threshold.

"We have no choice!" he shouted repeatedly as he entered the Capitol.

After police ordered him and others to leave Pelosi's office, Barnett realized he had left his American flag behind. Body-camera video captured Barnett shouting at a police officer in the Rotunda for help in retrieving the flag.

More than 940 people have been charged with federal crimes related to the Jan.6 attack. Nearly 500 of them have pleaded guilty. Barnett is one of several dozen Capitol riot defendants whose case has gone to trial.

Barnett is a retired firefighter from Gravette, Ark. He said he regrets coming to Washington for the "Stop the Steal" rally where then-President Trump addressed a crowd of supporters.

"Two years of lost life. Misery for my family," he said.

While on house arrest last year, Barnett raised money by charging donors $100 for photos of him with his feet on a desk.

A prosecutor told jurors during the trial's opening statements that Barnett planned the trip for weeks and came prepared for violence.

McBride told jurors that Barnett was just a "crazy guy from Arkansas" who didn't hurt anybody on Jan. 6 and couldn't have harmed anybody with the stun gun device because it was broken that day. McBride sarcastically called it "the most famous trespass case of all time."

Prosecutors said Barnett had a history of arming himself at political demonstrations. In July 2020, they said, a 911 caller reported that a man matching Barnett's description had pointed a rifle at her during a "Back the Blue" rally.

"Law enforcement ultimately closed the investigation as unfounded due to unresolved apparent discrepancies in the evidence," prosecutors wrote.

In November 2020, police were called to a "Save the Children" rally when a caller said Barnett was carrying a gun at the protest and acting suspiciously.

Kunzelman writes for the Associated Press.

4 Oath Keepers convicted on rare charge

Jury finds members of the far-right group guilty of seditious conspiracy in the Capitol attack.

By Michael Kunzelman and Alanna Durkin Richer

WASHINGTON — Four members of the Oath Keepers were convicted Monday of seditious conspiracy in the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack, in the second major trial of far-right extremists accused of plotting to forcibly keep President Trump in power.

The verdict against Joseph Hackett of Sarasota, Fla.; Roberto Minuta of Prosper, Texas; David Moerschel of Punta Gorda, Fla.; and Edward Vallejo of Phoenix came weeks after a jury convicted the group's leader, Stewart Rhodes, in the mob's attack.

It's another victory for the Justice Department, which is also trying to secure sedition convictions against the former leader of the Proud Boys and four associates. The trial against Enrique Tarrio and his lieutenants opened this month in Washington and is expected to last several weeks.

The Washington jury in the Oath Keepers case deliberated for about 12 hours over three days before delivering the guilty verdict on the rarely used charge, which carries up to 20 years in prison. The four were also convicted of two other conspiracy charges, as well as obstructing an official proceeding: Congress' certification of the 2020 presidential election.

Minuta, Hackett and Moerschel were acquitted of lesser charges.

The judge didn't immediately set a date for sentencing and denied prosecutors' bid to lock up the men while they await sentencing. The men were ordered to remain in home detention with electronic monitoring.

It was one of the most serious cases brought so far in the sweeping Jan. 6 investigation, which continues to grow two years after the riot. The Justice Department has charged nearly 1,000 people for participating in the riot, and the tally increases by the week.

Atty. Gen. Merrick Garland told reporters after the verdict that he is "grateful to the prosecutors, agents and staff for their outstanding work."

Oath Keepers leader Rhodes and Florida chapter leader Kelly Meggs were convicted of seditious conspiracy in the previous trial, which ended in November. They were the first people in decades to be found guilty at trial of the Civil War-era charge. Three other Oath Keepers were cleared of the charge in that case but were found guilty of other serious crimes. All are awaiting sentencing.

Lawyers for Moerschel and Minuta suggested after the verdict that their clients were hurt by not being able to stand trial alongside Rhodes, as the judge split the case into two groups. Moerchel's lawyer, Scott Weinberg, said he could have pointed to Rhodes as the "real bad guy."

"I think it would be easier to be a low-level person in the same case as Stewart Rhodes, who is basically the figurehead of this organization," Weinberg said.

William Shipley Jr., Minuta's attorney, said he was disappointed and "somewhat puzzled" by the verdict. He said that the government's witnesses didn't stand up to scrutiny and that there were gaps in the evidence presented.

"We didn't really think that in the 15 days of trial testimony, the government really had a good day," Shipley said.

Vallejo left the courthouse without speaking to reporters.

Hackett's attorney, Angela Halim, declined to comment after the verdict.

"We got a trial by residents of a small judicial district who in one way or another were almost all impacted by the events of Jan. 6," Shipley said. "I think that raises some real troubling issues."

Prosecutors told jurors that Rhodes and his band of extremists soon after the 2020 election began to prepare an armed rebellion to keep Trump in power. Messages show Rhodes and the Oath Keepers discussing the prospect of a "bloody" civil war and the need to keep Joe Biden, who won the election, out of the White House.

"Our democracy was under attack, but for the defendants, it was everything they trained for and a moment to celebrate," prosecutor Louis Manzo told jurors in his closing argument.

Prosecutors alleged that the Oath Keepers amassed weapons and stashed them at a Virginia hotel for "quick reaction force" teams that could shuttle guns into Washington to support their plot if needed. The weapons were never used.

Defense attorneys sought to downplay violent messages as mere bluster and said the Oath Keepers came to Washington to provide security at events before the riot.

They seized on prosecutors' lack of evidence that the Oath Keepers had an explicit plan to storm the Capitol before Jan. 6 and told jurors that the extremists who attacked the Capitol acted spontaneously, like thousands of other rioters.

"They left evidence out, and they picked and chose what they wanted," said Shipley.

Prosecutors argued that while there is not evidence spelling out a plan to attack the Capitol, the Oath Keepers saw the riot as a means to an end and sprung into action at an apparent opportunity to keep Trump in power.

Hackett, Moerschel and other Oath Keepers approached the Capitol in a military-style stack formation before entering the building, according to prosecutors. Minuta and his group from a second stack of Oath Keepers clashed with police after heeding Rhodes' call to race to the Capitol, according to court documents.

Prosecutors said Vallejo, a U.S. Army veteran and Rhodes ally, drove from Arizona to prepare with the quick reaction force at the hotel outside Washington. Jurors heard an audio recording of Vallejo talking about a "declaration of a guerrilla war" on the morning of Jan. 6.

Kunzelman and Durkin Richer write for the Associated Press.

FOR THE RECORD

Phoebe Dynevor: In the Jan. 23 Calendar section, a photo caption accompanying an article on the Sundance Film Festival misspelled the first name of actor Phoebe Dynevor as Phobe.

Prosecution hammers ex-top cop of Mexico

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Shielded by anonymity and extra security, jurors got their first look Monday at a rare U.S. trial of a former Cabinet-level Mexican official charged with taking bribes to aid drug traffickers he was supposed to be neutralizing.

After blowing a kiss to his wife and daughter in the courtroom gallery, Genaro García Luna, who once was Mexico's top security official, watched with little outward reaction as opening statements began. His case folds in Mexico's politics, its vast and violent drug trade, uncomfortable connections between the two, and delicate U.S.-Mexico relations about fighting drugs and corruption.

García Luna is accused of accepting millions of dollars to let the notorious Sinaloa cartel operate with impunity as it sent tons of cocaine to the U.S.

"The person who's supposed to be in charge of fighting the Sinaloa cartel was actually its most valued asset ... and with his help, the cartel made millions," Assistant U.S. Atty. Philip Pilmar told jurors. He called García Luna "a man who betrayed both his country and ours."

He said that while García Luna portrayed himself to both countries as a drug enforcement hero, he saw to it that the cartel got information on investigations, smooth passage for its cocaine through police checkpoints, and police escorts — and sometimes even badges — for cartel members. Officers hand-delivered drug shipments from airports and acted as mercenaries to kill people for cartels, Pilmar said.

García Luna's lead lawyer, César de Castro, told jurors that the government's case rested on "rumors, speculation and the words of some of the biggest criminals in the world."

"No money, no photos, no video, no texts, no emails, no recordings, no documents — no credible, believable evidence that Genaro García Luna helped the cartel," the lawyer said in his opening statement. He described the case as "a very public and angry display" by a U.S. government that is forsaking a onetime drug-fighting partner whose diligent work made him enemies: corrupt police officers, politicians who opposed the anti-drug war, and cartels. Traffickers are taking the stand to lessen their own punishments and exact revenge, the attorney argued.

"Don't let the cartels play you," he told jurors.

They soon heard a different story from former police officer-turned-cartel insider Sergio Villarreal Barragan, known as "El Grande."

He testified about joint Sinaloa-police raids on the rival Gulf cartel's operations in the city of Monterrey; police officers letting him set up routes to move 1,700 to 2,600 pounds of cocaine multiple times a week through the state of Chiapas; and police tipping the cartel to forthcoming searches so the traffickers could clear out beforehand.

Villarreal Barragan said that after Sinaloa cartel drugs were seized in Sonora state, he got the contraband released by reminding the local police commander that the cartel had gotten him placed in his job.

During these alleged episodes in the early 2000s, García Luna headed the federal police force — and got payoffs from the Sinaloa group, Villarreal Barragan said. He described García Luna picking up duffel bags full of cash at a Mexico City safe house and collecting $14 million placed in boxes at a warehouse full of cocaine that police had seized from the Gulf gang and turned over to its Sinaloa rivals.

Cartel leaders viewed García Luna as "the best investment they had," said Villarreal Barragan, who pleaded guilty to drug trafficking. García Luna's lawyers haven't yet had their turn to question him.

García Luna is being tried in the same Brooklyn federal courthouse where drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman was convicted.

MARCO UGARTE Associated Press

"WITH his help, the cartel made millions," Assistant U.S. Atty. Philip Pilmar said of Genaro García Luna, pictured in 2010 when he was secretary of public safety.

Ex-FBI official aided Russian oligarch, U.S. says

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — A former high-ranking FBI counterintelligence official who investigated Russian oligarchs has been indicted on charges he secretly worked for one, in violation of U.S. sanctions. The official was also charged, in a separate indictment, with taking cash from a former foreign security officer.

Charles McGonigal, the special agent in charge of the FBI's counterintelligence division in New York from 2016-18, is accused in an indictment unsealed Monday of working with a former Soviet diplomat-turned-Russian interpreter on behalf of Oleg Deripaska, a billionaire they purportedly referred to in code as "the big guy" and "the client."

McGonigal, who had supervised and participated in investigations of Russian oligarchs, including Deripaska, worked to have Deripaska's sanctions lifted in 2019 and took money from him in 2021 to investigate a rival oligarch, the Justice Department said.

The FBI investigated McGonigal, showing a willingness to go after one of its own. Nonetheless, the indictment is an unwelcome headline for the FBI when the bureau is entangled in separate, politically charged investigations involving the handling of classified documents by both President Biden and former President Trump, and as newly ascendant Republicans in Congress have pledged to investigate high-profile decisions by the bureau and Justice Department.

McGonigal and the interpreter, Sergey Shestakov, were arrested Saturday — McGonigal after landing at John F. Kennedy International Airport and Shestakov at his home in Morris, Conn. — and held at a federal jail in Brooklyn. They pleaded not guilty Monday and were released on bail.

McGonigal, 54, and Shestakov, 69, are charged with violating and conspiring to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, conspiring to commit money laundering and money laundering. Shestakov is also charged with making material misstatements to the FBI.

McGonigal "has had a long, distinguished career with the FBI," his lawyer, Seth DuCharme, told reporters when he left court with McGonigal after his arraignment.

"This is obviously a distressing day for Mr. McGonigal and his family, but we'll review the evidence, we'll closely scrutinize it and we have a lot of confidence in Mr. McGonigal," said DuCharme, the former top federal prosecutor in Brooklyn.

McGonigal was separately charged in federal court in Washington, D.C., with concealing at least $225,000 in cash he allegedly received from a former Albanian intelligence official while working for the FBI.

The indictment does not charge or characterize the payment to McGonigal as a bribe, but federal prosecutors say that, while hiding the payment from the FBI, he took actions as an FBI supervisor that were aimed at his own financial benefit.

They included proposing that a pharmaceutical company pay the man's company $500,000 in exchange for scheduling a business meeting involving a representative from the U.S. delegation to the United Nations.

In a bureau-wide email Monday, FBI Director Christopher A. Wray said McGonigal's alleged conduct "is entirely inconsistent with what I see from the men and women of the FBI who demonstrate every day through their actions that they're worthy of the public's trust."

The U.S. Treasury Department added Deripaska to its sanctions list in 2018 for purported ties to the Russian government and Russia's energy sector amid Moscow's ongoing threats to Ukraine.

In September, federal prosecutors in Manhattan charged Deripaska and three associates with conspiring to violate U.S. sanctions by plotting to ensure his child was born in the United States.

Shestakov, who worked as an interpreter for federal courts and prosecutors in New York City after retiring as a diplomat in 1993, helped connect McGonigal to Deripaska, according to the indictment.

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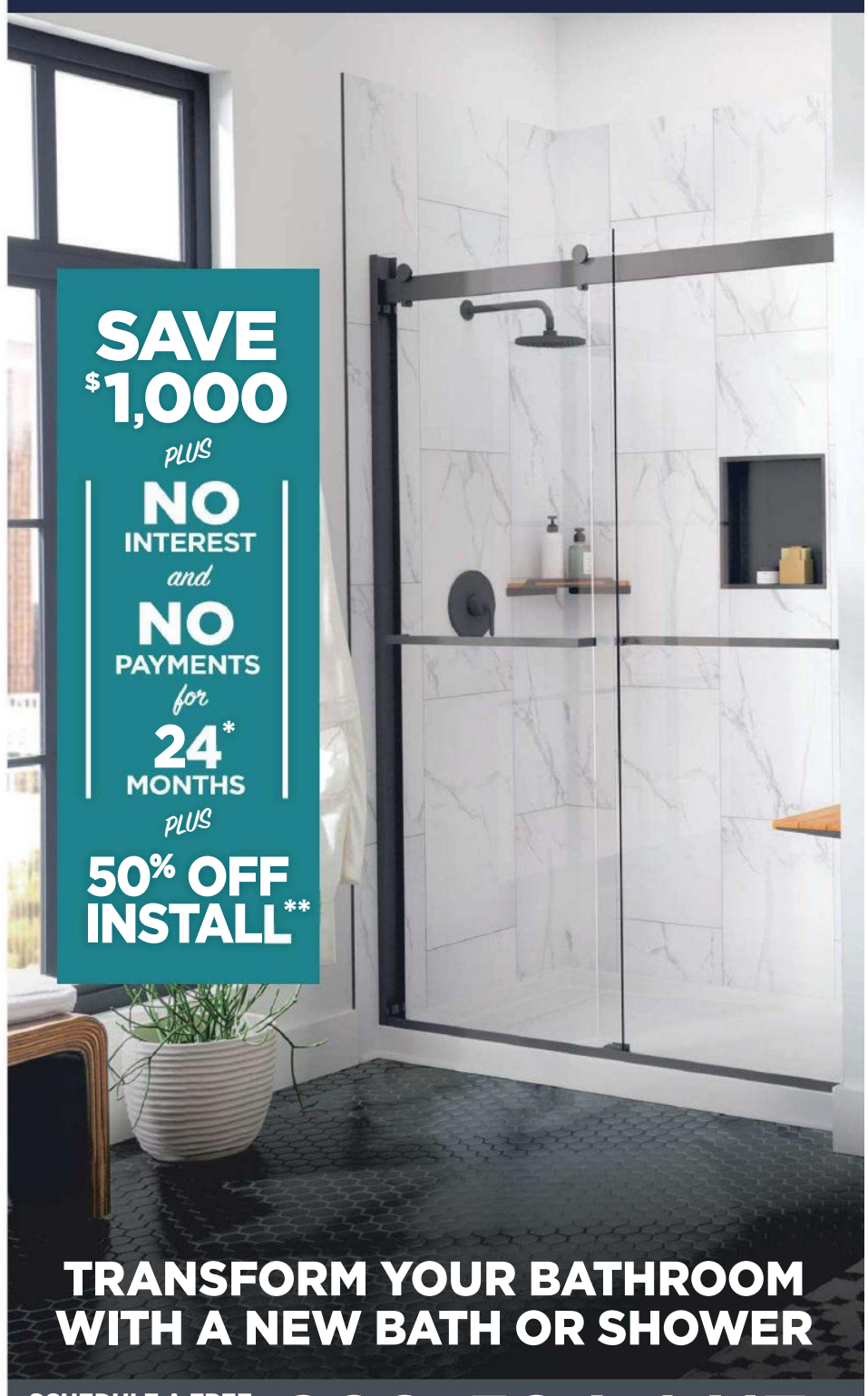

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Monterey Park victims shared a love of dance

[**Victims,** from A1]
as Ming Wei Ma, whose age was not immediately available, and Nancy Liu, 63.

Nine others were injured Saturday when a gunman opened fire inside the Monterey Park studio, where people had gathered for a dance party to count down the hours leading to the Lunar New Year.

The gunman, identified by police as Huu Can Tran, 72, then fled to a second dance hall in Alhambra, where a man working the front desk wrestled a semi-automatic pistol away from him. The next day, Tran fatally shot himself as police approached his van in a Torrance parking lot, according to officials.

According to law enforcement sources, the investigation is focused on Tran's interactions at the two dance studios and whether he was motivated to kill by jealousy over a relationship.

The shooting, in the heart of the region's Chinese community, shocked Monterey Park's sense of self and devastated the nation.

For Fonda Quan, the tragedy was deeply personal. Her family got a call this weekend informing them that Nhan — her aunt, known to loved ones as Mymy — had been shot in the massacre. Before long, the coroner called to confirm that Nhan was among those killed.

"It's gut-wrenching," said Quan, 32, who grew up sharing a home with her aunt, as well as her parents and grandmother. "It's been difficult to process."

For years, she said, her aunt spent weekends taking classes at the Star studio. On Saturday, Nhan had decided to dart out early to go home and set up a family shrine to pay homage to ancestors for the Lunar New Year.

But just as Nhan and her dance partner were backing their car out of the studio parking lot, the gunman approached from the driver's side, according to an account relayed to Nhan's family by the partner.

The shooter fired at them, striking Nhan several times, before sprinting into the ballroom. Her partner, who was seated beside her in the car, was not hit, Quan said, and didn't recognize the gunman.

Nhan, who grew up in Ho Chi Minh City and emigrated to Rosemead with her family in the 1980s, had an infectious cheerfulness and an eagerness to celebrate the wins of those in her wide circle of friends. She loved ballroom dancing, Quan said, and all things fashion.

Along with a statement the family posted on Twitter was a picture of Nhan smiling proudly in a teal dress and a pair of wispy earrings.

"Unfairly, Saturday was her last dance," the statement read. "We are starting the Lunar New Year broken."

One of Nhan's longtime instructors, Maksym Kapitanchuk, said her presence breathed life into both the Star Ballroom Dance Studio and Lai Lai Ballroom and Studio in Alhambra, where the shooter went after gunning down the Monterey Park victims.

Kapitanchuk met Nhan at Lai Lai in 2010, soon after he moved to the U.S. from Ukraine. Nhan was his very first student, he said, and her passion was undeniable.

"Dance was her life," he said, adding that she attended classes every night of the week. "She was just the light of the class and the light of the studio."

His client base started out small, but Nhan quickly tapped into her vast network of friends. Before long, she was bringing five or 10 — sometimes even 20 — new people to his classes. And she was always there herself.

"I really don't know how I'm going to handle it right now," he said, "teaching without her."

Elena Krifuks, an instructor at Lai Lai, said that during social dances like the event on Saturday, Nhan always sat at the same table, just to the left of the stereo system. Tucked there, she sipped tea during breaks before jumping back onto the floor to samba or tango.

Krifuks said she relied on Nhan to get the word out about events.

"She had everyone's phone numbers," Krifuks said, "and she was friends with everyone."

Both instructors were featured in a 2019 Oscar-nominated documentary short, "Walk Run Cha-Cha," which highlighted the Lai Lai studio. Among the large cast of students were many who had initially been brought there by Nhan.

Another victim, Alvero, shared that love of ballroom dance and for years had dropped in at events at Star, according to a relative who declined to be identified.

The relative, who learned of the shooting from TV on Sunday morning, said Alvero was married and had two children in their 30s.

"He was a cheerful guy," the relative said. "He wants to dance or sing."

At Star, Ma was a constant presence — a skilled social connector, friends said, who worked and danced at the studio.

In the moments before the shooting Saturday, Ma, who helped manage the studio, had been acting as DJ, playing a song called "Light Rain in March," according to an eyewitness who asked to be identified only by her first name, Grace. About a dozen people were on the dance floor when the barrage began, she said.

"Heartbreaking," said Dariusz Michalski, an instructor at the studio. "We are just speechless and cannot find the words to describe how we feel right now."

Another instructor, David DuVal, said that Ma — known affectionately as Mr. Ma — had emigrated with his wife from China, where he had been part of a well-known dance group.

A third instructor, Lauren Woods, posted about Ma on Facebook, saying she had run into him at the studio in the hours before the shooting. As she arrived to teach a private lesson, she spotted Ma, who offered to help her search for a parking spot on streets packed with people attending the Lunar New Year festival.

"I'm personally thankful to have that last beautiful interaction," she wrote. "He was the heart of Star Ballroom."

Ma didn't speak much English, Woods said, but he never struggled to communicate his affection, often greeting her with a kiss on the cheek.

"My teacher! My teacher!" he would say, swooping her into a hug. "Love you! Love you!"

Lily Ko, who has taken a class at Star every Tuesday for two years, recalled sneaking glimpses of Ma teaching another class — he was really good, she remembers thinking.

Her Tuesday classes ended around 10 p.m., and Ma often waited for her so she wouldn't have to walk to the car alone.

"He made sure I was safe," she recalled.

On Twitter, Juno Blees said her mother — identified by the New York Times as Liu — died in the shooting.

"My mom is gone. She never made it out of the dance studio," Blees wrote. "My family is devastated."

For the communities at both dance halls, Saturday's shooting decimated a sense of safety.

Alyce Harley said her mother, Marlene Xu, had been going to the studio for seven years but wasn't there Saturday. It had become a sanctuary for Xu, an immigrant from China who found a renewed sense of belonging at the studio.

It was a place for the 67-year-old to celebrate holidays and catch up with friends — friends whom she is now mourning.

Two of the dead were Taiwanese American, according to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Los Angeles. One was a Chinese citizen, Chinese consular officials said.

"She is really, really struggling," Harley said of her mother. "Folks like my mother and many other immigrants were able to partake in something very Western without it feeling very foreign to them.

"They could feel like they could take part in the arts without feeling like they were 'othered' or feeling like they were left out," Harley added. "That's what Star Ballroom was."

ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

A CORONER'S official assesses a van whose driver had died of a self-inflicted gunshot. The driver was confirmed to be Huu Can Tran, who earlier had opened fire at a dance studio in Monterey Park, killing 11 people.

A 'miserable and desperate' life

[**Gunman,** from A1]
have been arrested only once — in 1990 on suspicion of unlawful possession of a firearm.

And at the scene of the shooting, investigators recovered 42 shell casings — one for each of the bullets Tran fired in his fusillade — a handgun manufactured in China and a large-capacity magazine, Luna said.

What else is known about the gunman is gleaned from scant paper trails left from a petty court battle over a security deposit and a divorce, as well as accounts from a few neighbors and friends. Together, they offer a fragmented portrait of a lonely, embittered man for whom dancing may have offered a rare reprieve from an otherwise empty life.

A former friend of Tran, who was also his tenant for years and ended up suing him in 2014 when Tran refused to fully return his security deposit, described Tran as a loner who rarely had visitors and was typically alone except when he was dancing at Star Studio or Lai Lai Ballroom & Studio, where he drove after the shooting.

"Two simple words that cover the whole thing. He's a person of distrust. He distrusts people around him. Second word is hate. He hates people around him, especially if he thought someone was doing bad on him," said the former tenant, who asked not to be named. "He would say, 'Someday I will get back at you, get even, get revenge.' "

"I think his life was so miserable and desperate that he chose that day to end his life and meanwhile he wanted to get people he didn't like or hated to go with him," the man said.

After their court dispute, the men remained friends and moved into apartments in the same complex, the man said. Besides dancing, Tran liked to get meals. The two of them would go to restaurants for lunch, never dinner, and would eat classic Chinese staples like dumplings.

He knew Tran to work only a very small amount of time as a carpet cleaner for restaurants. "I seldom saw him go out to work," he said. "That was the only job he had. He led a very simple life."

Their once cordial relationship soured when he left for a month to visit Taiwan, upsetting Tran for no clear reason. When he returned, Tran gave him the cold shoulder.

The former friend said Tran occasionally spoke of an ex-wife, complaining that she had led him astray by persuading him to close a trucking business he owned and sell his truck.

Business records filed with the state show Tran started Tran's Trucking Inc. in 2002 and registered the company in San Gabriel. He dissolved it two years later.

He married his wife in June 2001 and the couple filed for divorce in December 2005, court records show. The woman could not be reached for comment.

Tran seemed happy only when he was dancing, the former friend said.

"That's the only two places he went pretty much every night," the man said, referencing the Monterey Park studio and the second studio in Alhambra where he drove right after the shooting.

A Monterey Park resident who would identify herself only as Grace said she had gone to the dance studio, most recently in December, and knew many people who went regularly.

On a WeChat group, she said, the studio's customers were sharing unconfirmed reports Tran had been jealous that a woman he knew had gone dancing without him on Saturday night and that he went to the studios in a rage searching for her.

Tran had been living at the Lakes at Hemet West, a mobile home park whose sign billed it as "a 55+ active living community," according to a public record and law enforcement sources. A security guard turned away a Times reporter at the front gate Sunday night.

A resident there, Karen Howard, said Tran "seemed like a perfectly normal neighbor."

"I didn't know him well," she said. "I don't think anyone did."

Before moving to Hemet, Tran lived for many years in a small white stucco home in San Gabriel with bars over the doors and windows and an orange tree in the front-yard, according to a neighbor.

The man lived across the street from Tran, whom he knew as Andy, and described him as a polite neighbor who helped him jump-start his car.

"He was kind to us, but he was very private," said the neighbor, who declined to give his name because he didn't want to be associated with Tran. He never revealed much of his background and kept his personal life to himself, the neighbor said.

A woman appeared to live at the house with Tran for periods, but "the majority of the time he was by himself," the neighbor said. The police were called to the house several times over the years for unknown reasons, he added.

He believes Tran owned a rug-cleaning business. He recalled him driving a white cargo van that looked similar to the one Tran was driving when police stopped him in Torrance the day after the shooting, although that van looked newer. Tran was found dead at the wheel from a self-inflicted gunshot.

Tran did not seem to be a wealthy man, but he kept an old beige Rolls-Royce parked behind his house and drove a Mercedes-Benz that ran on biodiesel, the neighbor said. "Every once in a while he would pull it out," he recalled about the Rolls-Royce.

Times staff writers Summer Lin, Terry Castleman, Hayley Smith and Anh Do contributed to this report.

Disarming the shooter: 'I was gonna die here'

BY NATHAN SOLIS AND ALEXANDRA E. PETRI

The dance social at Lai Lai Ballroom & Studio was nearly over Saturday night, with just a few people left on the ballroom floor. Brandon Tsay, whose family owns the Alhambra studio and who works at the ticket office, was in the lobby looking into the studio when he heard the front door close, followed by the sound of metal clinking, he said.

"That's when I turned around and saw there was an Asian man holding a gun," Tsay told ABC's "Good Morning America." "My first thought was I was gonna die here. This was it."

Tsay said the man appeared to be looking around the room "for targets" and "people to harm."

In interviews with the New York Times and ABC, the 26-year-old said that he lunged at the man with both his hands, setting off a struggle in the lobby for control of the gun. "I needed to take this weapon, disarm him or else everybody would have died," Tsay told "Good Morning America."

The gunman was hitting him across the face and bashing the back of his head, he said. Tsay said he eventually shoved the man aside and grabbed the gun. He pointed it at the man and yelled, "Get the hell out of here!" he said. "I'll shoot, get away! Go!"

Tsay said the man lingered for a few moments before walking out the door and getting into his van. Tsay said he called police "with the gun still in my hand."

JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

BRANDON TSAY was in the lobby of his family's Lai Lai Ballroom & Studio when the gunman entered.

He told ABC that he did not recognize the man.

Tsay said he was unaware that just 20 minutes earlier, the gunman, identified by authorities as 72-year-old Huu Can Tran of Hemet, had killed 10 people and injured several others when he opened fire in a crowded ballroom in nearby Monterey Park.

The death toll rose to 11 Monday after the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services announced in a statement that one of the victims being treated at LAC+USC Medical Center succumbed to their injuries.

Tom Tsay, Brandon's father, rushed to the Alhambra dance studio after learning about the shooting, gripped with fear.

"The first thing I did was ask whether Brandon was OK," Tsay said in an interview outside of the family's San Marino home early Monday, adding that his daughter reassured him Brandon was safe.

It wasn't until much later that he learned of his son's heroism, he said.

"I'm very proud," Tsay said. "That night was a tragedy. It could have been much worse if he wasn't disarmed."

Brandon Tsay called his sister, Brenda Tsay, just after he took the gun from Tran and then called the police.

Just a few people were still dancing and socializing when Tran came in. Many of them were longtime customers who visit the studio, she said.

When her brother called, he wasn't making sense, thinking that he was involved in an attempted robbery, Tsay said.

"Obviously, I started to ask questions," she said. "He said, 'Don't ask questions. Just go through and look through the thing.'"

Brandon Tsay was referring to video surveillance.

"Once I saw what happened, my stomach turned," Brenda Tsay said. "I was so upset, so angry to be honest. I felt a little guilty because I wasn't there."

Tsay and her father were not at the studio when Tran arrived. Brandon Tsay is usually not there, but on Saturday he was sitting at the front desk near the entrance.

When she finally saw her brother in person, he was calm but running on adrenaline. "I'm just happy that he's alive," Brenda Tsay. "I'm just happy he wasn't shot."

She described her brother as compassionate, nice and caring.

"He's never hurt anyone in his life," said Tsay, adding that "he's braver than the rest of us."

But he's shaken up, Tsay said, and trying to carry on with little tasks throughout the day. He's been sleeping a lot, she said.

Brandon Tsay was sleeping as his father spoke with reporters Monday.

The gunman had walked into Lai Lai "probably with the intent to kill two more people," Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said at a news conference Sunday.

Luna, who said Sunday that it was "two community members" who disarmed the suspect, officials and others in California and across the country have commended Tsay as a hero, stressing that his actions prevented further tragedy.

"A lot of people have been telling me how much courage I had," Tsay said. "Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the ability to have adversity to fear when fearful events happen such as this."

He said his heart went out to all the victims, families and community members. "I hope they could find the courage and the strength to persevere," he said.

Workers near the site of shooting try to carry on

Start of Lunar New Year brings a surreal mix of sentiments in Monterey Park.

By Daniel Miller

Carolyn Cole Los Angeles Times

INEZ ARAKAKI and her son, Zachary, 9, place red roses in front of Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park on Monday.

Allen J. Schaben Los Angeles Times

THE ENTRANCE to Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park, where Huu Can Tran, 72, fatally shot 11 people and wounded nine others Saturday night.

The red envelope tradition had been upheld over the weekend despite the pall cast by the mass shooting. It made for a strange mix of sentiment.

Xiang Chen didn't want to work on Sunday. She was frightened.

Her family's Chinese restaurant, Spicy Duck Wang La Ya, is located on West Garvey Avenue just a few doors down from Star Ballroom Dance Studio, the site of the mass shooting that left 11 dead and nine others wounded in Monterey Park on Saturday night.

"I feel so scared," said Chen, who explained that dance instructors at the studio would regularly pick up food from the restaurant, where the spicy duck necks, a specialty, glisten behind glass in a display case.

But Chen, a restaurant server, felt obligated to be there, in part because of a Lunar New Year tradition. In Chinese and other Asian cultures, the holiday, whose festivities began Saturday, is marked with the bestowing of red envelopes filled with cash. And the tradition extends to restaurants, with owners typically doing the giving to workers.

So Chen made her way to Spicy Duck Wang La Ya, in the Taipei Center strip mall, and delivered a red envelope to the restaurant's chef.

"We do it every year," she said.

Chen wasn't alone. Proprietors and staff at eateries on and around West Garvey Avenue, which was host to a large Lunar New Year's Eve celebration Saturday, said that the red envelope tradition had been upheld over the weekend despite the pall cast by the mass shooting.

It made for a strange mix of sentiment. Magnanimity and sorrow. Gratitude and fear.

"Everybody was very happy" on Saturday, said Annie Li, a server at Longten Cafe, also in the Taipei Center. But by the end of her shift Sunday afternoon, she was eager to go home. "People are really scared."

Roger Yeh, owner of MoMo Bakery, also on Garvey, had planned to distribute red envelopes to his workers Saturday but was discouraged by the crowds that filled his establishment, which is known for its savory pork pastries.

"It was so packed," Yeh said. "I didn't want people to see there was money."

After he learned of the shooting, Yeh, who lives in Palos Verdes, weighed whether to come to his Taiwanese bakery Sunday to hand out the envelopes. "I could have given it to them" Monday, he said. "But I thought maybe [Sunday] is better."

Yeh was glad he carried on the tradition Sunday.

"It's strange," said Yeh, who immigrated to the Southland from Taiwan in 1981. "It's a mixed feeling — my sentiment goes up and down."

In addition to the odd tenor of the gift giving, workers and operators at the eateries near the site of the shooting contended with a slow business day. Typically, servers and others said, Lunar New Year makes for a day of brisk sales. But after the shooting, patrons stayed away from establishments that had counted on being thronged.

"My friends told me they're scared to come to Monterey Park," Chen said.

She noted that pig's feet would normally be a big seller on Lunar New Year — the animal is considered lucky in Chinese culture — but "not today."

It was quiet at nearby ABC Cafe, a restaurant on North Garfield Avenue. Around dinnertime, a worker snipped the tips of green beans with red-handled kitchen shears in an otherwise unoccupied section of the eatery. Diners filled only two tables.

Sunday had been "very, very slow," said a server at ABC Cafe who declined to give her name. "My boss is not here," she apologized.

Some people still ventured out for their scheduled Lunar New Year celebrations. Owen Wang said he and his wife went forward with a planned dinner at Longten Cafe because he wanted to support the restaurant. Wang said he had come for the dried beef noodles, while his wife, Trang Lai, explained that she had wanted the Korean-style beef steak.

Normally, he said, the restaurant, a Hong Kong-style cafe, would be "packed" on Lunar New Year.

"It should be very busy and loud," he said outside the restaurant, under a darkening sky that moments earlier had been a striking shade of cantaloupe. Instead, their meal Sunday had been subdued, with only a handful of other patrons dining there. Still, Wang said, "We loved it."

Yeh said that MoMo Bakery had brought in just one-third of the business it would have otherwise done. It was a little after 6 p.m. as he sat at a table toward the rear of the establishment trying to make sense of the shooting.

"It's a quiet community," said Yeh, who also owns a MoMo Bakery in Alhambra. "People here are peaceful."

Suddenly, Gov. Gavin Newsom and his aides swept into the bakery via the rear entrance. Alerted to the presence of the politician, Yeh's jaw dropped. "I'm a Republican," he said, giving a wry smile.

He hurried to introduce himself to Newsom, who ordered a green tea, Yeh said. While they chatted amiably and posed for a photograph, a member of Newsom's small entourage said he would not be available for an interview with The Times.

Before long, Newsom departed through the bakery's front entrance, and Yeh returned to the table where he'd been sitting. He tried once more to process his emotions. He was feeling buoyed, but shocked by the encounter.

It was, Yeh said, a surreal ending to a strange and sad day.

Firearms' origins are 'part of the puzzle' for investigators

[**Weapons,** from A1]

The gun, which was used with an extended magazine, is generally illegal in California. Luna said investigators also recovered a Norinco 7.62 x 25 semiautomatic handgun registered to Tran from inside a white van where the 72-year-old was found dead from shooting himself.

As authorities continue to comb Tran's background for a possible motive, Luna said his agency has been working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to determine the guns' origins.

"It's part of the puzzle that we're trying to put together," he said.

The MAC-10 has shown up in countless action movies and TV shows from the mid-1970s into the 1990s. It resembles a compact version of a machine gun but is considered semiautomatic, firing one bullet with each squeeze of the trigger. Although the weapon was frequently wielded on-screen by John Wayne, Arnold Schwarzenegger and others, in the real world it is considered more of a show piece due to its poor aim and reputation for jamming.

The version that Tran was carrying had been modified, Luna told reporters on Monday, without offering further details.

James Densley, a criminal justice professor at Metropolitan State University in Minnesota, said the gun evokes images of violent crime in the 1990s but has rarely been used in mass shootings.

Densley and Jillian Peterson, a professor at Minnesota's Hamline University, started a database of mass shootings, called the Violence Project. The archive dates to a 1966 attack on the campus of the University of Texas in Austin, considered the first modern mass shooting. It uses the academic definition of a mass shooting as an incident in a public space with at least four fatalities.

By that measure, Densley said, the preferred weapon among mass shooters in recent years has been an AR-15-style rifle, which was used in a third of the 66 such attacks in the U.S. between 2012 and 2022. In the prior half-century, he said, the high-powered weapons had been used five times.

Such rifles have become the norm in part, he said, because they are "a kind of utility of weapon; they are lethally efficient and they can be modified." Research also suggests a "contagion effect," in which mass shooters are likely to copy previous attackers, down to the type of firearm used, he said.

"Our failure to deal with mass shootings as a society normalizes that form of violence, and I think that's why we see this happening with increased regularity," he said. "Mass shootings have become so frequent that we are telling the world that this is just a part of everyday life. We've normalized it. And that means that when people are feeling disgruntled they can turn to violence because there's models for that behavior."

Experts on firearms and shooting tactics described Tran's decision to use a MAC-10 as unconventional, as opposed to the semiautomatic rifles more commonly associated with mass shootings in America.

The firearm Tran used would be easier to conceal than a long rifle and is more effective at a shorter range. That might have been a factor if Tran was known to his victims and believed he could get close to them without raising alarms, said Ed Obayashi, a Plumas County Sheriff's Department deputy with a background in police use-of-force and shooting tactics.

"Its concealability and rapid rate of fire make it popular," Obayashi said. "It would have been very, very easy to conceal that weapon in a coat, and all it takes is one hand to fire."

Surveillance images have shown Tran wearing a puffy jacket when he entered a dance hall in Alhambra, where he was disarmed by 26-year-old Brandon Tsay.

Thor Eells is a former SWAT commander for the Colorado Springs Police Department who serves as the executive director of the National Tactical Officers Assn. He said the weapon is best used to repel attacks, due to its high rate of fire and effectiveness in close quarters. Eells compared the weapon to an Uzi submachine gun, which can fire more rounds per minute than an AR-15.

The MAC-10 lacks the power of an AR-15, which fires rifle rounds that tend to cause more "catastrophic" injuries, Eells said, and is harder to aim.

"It's not easy to shoot accurately ... that's a lot of rounds going through a weapon so to control it is more difficult," he said. "Unless you have some degree of weapons skills, you're probably not going to opt for that as a first choice.

"It strikes me as being unusual that this is the weapon that he chose given all the other types of weapons that would have been available for him to use in this type of scenario," Eells continued.

Eells and Obayashi said it would not be uncommon to see a MAC-10 with an extended magazine capable of firing 30 rounds before needing to be reloaded.

Steve Gordon, a former LAPD SWAT officer and weapons expert, said this type of semiautomatic 9-millimeter pistol with extended magazines has an early '80s feel and called it "a poor man's Uzi."

"The only people who used them years ago were gangsters," he said. "It is designed to [do] close-quarter battle in a house or building and [use a] massive amount of rounds."

Gordon said the type of weapon was popularized by its looks rather than its performance. It is decidedly heavier than others. These types, however, do have the ability to attach very large magazines, which allows a user to shoot continuously for longer periods.

"It was more of a novelty gun, to blast at the range and to show friends," he said. "No real firearm-experienced people took the gun seriously. It was not accurate. Poor sighting system, heavy and unreliable. It could only really be used to cause maximum damage at a short distance."

Densley, the college professor, said the increase in such shootings comes as record gun sales during the pandemic have placed more firearms into circulation, some of which are lost, stolen or sold and otherwise end up on the black market.

"So it's like a mathematical problem in some degree. It's like the more guns there are in circulation, the more chances there are that they're going to fall into the hands of someone who shouldn't have them," he said.

While authorities have released little information about the motive of the Monterey Park shooter, Densley speculated whether he picked his weapon more for convenience than firepower.

"If this is a 72-year-old who doesn't have an extensive history of violence and perhaps wasn't planning on perpetrating a mass shooting in a traditional case, it might just be a case of a firearm that was available and affordable," Densley said. "Sometimes it's whatever is kind of available that people will use. We see this with school shooters. Shooters will generally get their firearms from home, because they are too young to buy guns on their own."

While the exact cause is difficult to "disentangle," Densley said there's no question that mass shootings have increased recently, with 7 of the 10 deadliest shootings having occurred in the last decade.

"The stressors of the pandemic may have exacerbated some of the risk factors of mass shootings," he said, which has coincided with a rise in mass shootings motivated by hate, including attacks in Buffalo, N.Y., and Uvalde, Texas. "That's a very modern phenomenon, which trends really with the rise of internet and social media."

Times staff writers Gabrielle LaMarr LeMee and Hannah Wiley contributed to this report.

BUSINESS

Right-wingers threw a fit over M&M's, and it worked

MICHAEL HILTZIK

If you're pondering what will be the stupidest right-wing freakout of 2023, you can probably stop now.

We're barely three weeks into the year, but the uproar over the personalities and images of M&M's candies seems well poised to top the list.

Most Americans — those who have, you know, a life — are probably unaware that Tucker Carlson and his far-right peanut gallery have been throwing a fit about a marketing makeover that Mars Wrigley, the private company that makes M&M's, gave this signature brand last year.

The company had long ago given the candies some personality, but not too much, giving them cartoon faces, arms, legs, etc. etc. Last year it updated their looks, making the group more "inclusive" in the company's term, slightly changing their garb and endowing them with insouciant grins and smirks. Notably, the footwear of the two female-presenting M&M's was toned down.

The supposed de-feminization of those candies was too much for Carlson, who has covered it to a degree that suggests some sort of foot and/or candy fetish. On Monday, Mars Wrigley capitulated to the supposed uproar Carlson had ginned up and announced it would "take an indefinite pause from the spokescandies." They'll apparently disappear from its ad campaigns. The new face of M&M's will be entertainer Maya Rudolph.

Dutifully, Rudolph went on NBC's "Today" show to announce, "I'm thrilled to be working with M&M's ... and I feel like it's such an honor to be asked to be part of such a legendary brand's campaign."

If you think it's nauseating to see sausage being made, consider the making of a twee advertising campaign. Rudolph will be rolled out, apparently, in a Super Bowl ad.

It's hard to put one's finger on the cultural significance of Carlson's conniption or Mars Wrigley's retreat. The best way to think about it is to take note that one of the biggest companies in the food business thinks it has to march to a gang of nobodies, and recognize that American marketing culture is now in the hands of the most asinine members of our society.

ALEX SEGRE UCG/Universal Images Group

MARS WRIGLEY capitulated to Tucker Carlson's bizarre rants about M&M's mascots. The company will "take an indefinite pause from the spokescandies."

> 'We definitely didn't think [our marketing move] would break the internet. But now we get it — even a candy's shoes can be polarizing.'
>
> — MARS WRIGLEY, the maker of M&M's

We've been remarking on the tendency of powerful institutions to act like poltroons when confronted by bullies.

Most recently, the National Hockey League, which revels in the violently bullying behavior of its enforcement squads on the ice, couldn't stand up to Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis, the tin-pot thug of Florida politics.

When DeSantis copped an attitude about the NHL's plan to stage an inclusive job fair for women as well as Black, Latino and LGBTQ people in connection with its upcoming all-star game in Fort Lauderdale, the league pulled back and made the job fair open to all. Because, obviously, the nearly all-white league doesn't need any outreach to other communities.

It's not unusual for consumer companies to be sensitive about the image their brand-name products carry into the marketplace. In 2010, Gap redesigned its logo and sprang the result on customers overnight, moving from its traditional white-lettering-on-blue background design to a stripped-down, modernized version.

Design experts and customers alike ridiculed the change, and Gap went back to the original version six days later.

The M&M's case isn't like that. Mars has been giving its computer-animated mascots individualized personalities since the 1990s. Has anyone ever really cared?

Other than Carlson, that is. Almost exactly one year ago, Carlson went on a tear about the last M&M's remodeling. The changes were almost undetectable to the naked eye, but Carlson found something nefarious in changing the shoes of the brown M&M's candy from high heels to, well, lower heels.

"M&M's will not be satisfied until every last cartoon character is deeply unappealing and totally androgynous," Carlson groused. "Until the moment when you wouldn't want to have a drink with any one of them. That's the goal. When you're totally turned off, we've achieved equity. They've won."

This is really too stupid to analyze. What's mystifying is that Mars Wrigley detected a surge of consumer fury that it thinks crested in recent days or weeks. "We weren't sure if anyone would really notice," the company said in announcing its marketing move. "And we definitely didn't think it would break the internet. But now we get it — even a candy's shoes can be polarizing."

That was "the last thing M&M's wanted since we're all about bringing people together."

The company's conclusion is so unlikely that some people think it's all a sham — that it had long planned to install Rudolph in its ads and figured that fomenting a fake controversy was the best way to gin up interest. Anyone who detected a surge in internet-based ire at M&M's makeover, raise your hand. Anyone? Bueller?

Think of it as an effort to exploit the Streisand Effect. (That arose from a lawsuit the world-famous entertainer filed to have an aerial photo of her Malibu property removed from the internet as an invasion of privacy. Rather than secure her privacy, Barbra Streisand's lawsuit turned it into an internet sensation. It remains easily accessible online.)

But Mars Wrigley is playing with fire. Even appearing to surrender to Tucker Carlson inflates his ego and encourages him to inflate other trivialities into moral crusades.

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Musk analogy to justify 'funding secured' tweet doesn't hit home

Tesla buyout was like 'handshake' real estate deal, CEO testifies.

BY RUSS MITCHELL

How do you know when a "handshake" deal is a done deal?

Elon Musk has an analogy for that.

On the witness stand Monday as he defended his Tesla take-private tweets from 2018, Musk explained: If a bank tells you they'll support your desire to buy a house, and you then agree to buy a house, the bank will give you a mortgage as a matter of course. "You still do that paperwork to do the transaction, but the transaction will go through," he said in court at his fraud trial.

For a man who recently sold $62 million worth of Bel-Air mansions, Musk has some ill-informed ideas about how real estate transactions work. For most people, anyway.

The analogy sparked a bit of amusement from the attorney representing investors who say Musk defrauded them.

"When I bought my house, I got a written commitment from a bank," plaintiff's attorney Nicholas Porritt said. "*You* may be able to buy a house without having a written commitment from a bank, but the rest of us understand you need a written commitment from the bank before you start making offers."

Musk quickly dropped the analogy. "That's not how things work with a sovereign investment fund," he said, and moved on to other explanations for having used the words "funding secured" in an Aug. 7, 2018, tweet about a take-Tesla-private deal that never happened and for which it was never shown that funding was in fact secured.

The funding was to come from Saudi Arabia's gargantuan Public Investment Fund. Musk testified that an earlier agreement that involved a Saudi purchase of 5% of Tesla stock was struck as a handshake deal, so in the take-private discussion, Musk said, "It's reasonable to assume you'd shake hands and that's it."

Musk had been discussing the take-private deal with Saudi investment fund head Yasir Al-Rumayyan in 2018, a week before his tweet. But in his testimony Monday, Musk acknowledged no financial terms were agreed to. After the "funding secured" brouhaha, Al-Rumayyan asked Musk for more financial information on the deal and then called it off. Musk said in court that Al-Rumayyan "did not stick to his word."

Investors say they believed that Musk's tweet was legit, and they lost big money as the stock's market value whipsawed in response, by billions of dollars.

No one involved in the potential deal but Musk has said they believed that funding was secured, including the Saudi fund.

Trial Judge Edward Chen, in U.S. District Court in San Francisco, instructed the jurors in the current case to regard the "funding secured" tweet as false. Four years ago, Musk signed a settlement with regulators in the wake of the tweet. Under that deal, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission can't call Musk a fraud, and Musk can't say he was acquitted of fraud charges.

The current case may turn on whether the jury believes Musk knew it was false when he tweeted it.

Although Musk was subdued and often spoke in fragmented and halting sentences when pressed by the investors' attorney, he was markedly more assured under questioning by his defense team.

"I'm being accused of making materially false statements. I'm being accused of fraud. It's outrageous," he said.

The defense focused on the first sentence of Musk's tweet, which read in full, "Am considering taking Tesla private at $420. Funding secured." Musk emphasized that his interest in taking the company private was genuine. However, the lawsuit does not allege that Musk had no intention of taking the company private, but is focused on whether funding was secured.

Earlier, he said that because he owns a large stake in rocket company SpaceX and because SpaceX could also invest in Tesla, that meant funding was secured.

Musk returns to the witness stand Tuesday.

Microsoft invests $10 billion in ChatGPT maker OpenAI

With latest funding, the software giant will gain access to popular, advanced artificial intelligence systems.

BY DINA BASS

Microsoft is investing $10 billion in OpenAI, whose artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT has lit up the internet since its introduction in November, amassing more than 1 million users within days and touching off a fresh debate over the role of AI in the workplace.

The new support, building on $1 billion Microsoft poured into OpenAI in 2019 and another round in 2021, is intended to give Microsoft access to some of the most popular and advanced artificial intelligence systems. Microsoft is competing with Alphabet, Amazon.com and Meta Platforms to dominate the fast-growing technology that generates text, images and other media in response to a short prompt.

At the same time, OpenAI needs Microsoft's funding and cloud-computing power to crunch massive volumes of data and run the increasingly complex models that enable programs such as DALL-E to generate realistic images based on a handful of words, and ChatGPT to create human-like conversational text.

Although Microsoft didn't give details of the new investment, a person familiar with the discussions who asked not to be identified because the information isn't public said it totals $10 billion over multiple years. Microsoft shares gained 1% to $242.58 in New York on Monday.

The deal will give a boost to Microsoft's Azure cloud while providing OpenAI with additional specially designed supercomputers to run its complex AI models and fuel its research. Microsoft plans to use OpenAI's models throughout consumer and corporate products and release new categories of products based on OpenAI's work, the two companies said in blog posts.

The Azure usage fueled by this deal is key for Microsoft as it battles to expand that business, said Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Anurag Rana. "This could even help Microsoft close the gap further with AWS," he said, referring to Amazon's market-leading cloud service.

OpenAI noted Monday that it uses Azure to train all of its models and said Microsoft's investment will enable it to accelerate its independent research. Azure will remain the exclusive cloud provider for OpenAI, the company said.

SWAYNE B. HALL Associated Press

MICROSOFT plans to add ChatGPT to its Azure cloud. The bot can give answers but not context.

As with Microsoft's previous investment in OpenAI, much of the value of the deal will take the form of Microsoft giving OpenAI the Azure cloud-computing horsepower needed to run its AI systems, said two people familiar with the deal.

The deal has a complicated structure because investors in OpenAI are limited in the return on their investment since it is a capped for-profit company. Microsoft will get nearly half of OpenAI's financial returns until its investment is repaid up to a predetermined cap, one of the people said. All earnings beyond what is owed to investors and employees are returned to OpenAI, which is governed by the OpenAI nonprofit organization.

Microsoft said this month that it planned to add ChatGPT to Azure and announced the broad availability of its Azure OpenAI Service, which has been an option to a limited set of customers since it was unveiled in 2021. The service gives Microsoft's cloud customers access to various OpenAI tools such as the GPT-3.5 language system that ChatGPT is based on, as well as the DALL-E model for generating images from text prompts. That enables Azure customers to use the OpenAI products in their own applications running in the cloud.

Microsoft itself is currently using the developer's language AI to add automation to its Copilot programming tool, and wants to add such technology to its Bing search engine, Office productivity applications, Teams chat program and security software. The Redmond, Wash.-based company is putting DALL-E into design software and offering it to Azure cloud customers.

Chief Executive Satya Nadella is deepening Microsoft's ties with OpenAI as Google, which has long been essentially untouchable in search, suddenly appears vulnerable. The Alphabet unit's prevailing model of keyword queries uses search engines to comb the web for specific terms and then lets users make their own decisions as to what information is useful.

By contrast, ChatGPT responds to questions about topics such as political science and computer programming with detailed explanations, and its question-and-answer format means users can drill down on a chosen topic. The bot can respond to queries in a natural and human-like manner, carrying on a conversation and answering follow-up questions, unlike the basic list of blue links that a Google search provides.

But ChatGPT has disadvantages compared with that old-school list of links. Unlike a search on Google or Bing, ChatGPT currently offers no context about where it sources the information it uses to build its answers, and OpenAI acknowledges that the tool's responses can be incorrect and shouldn't be relied on as accurate.

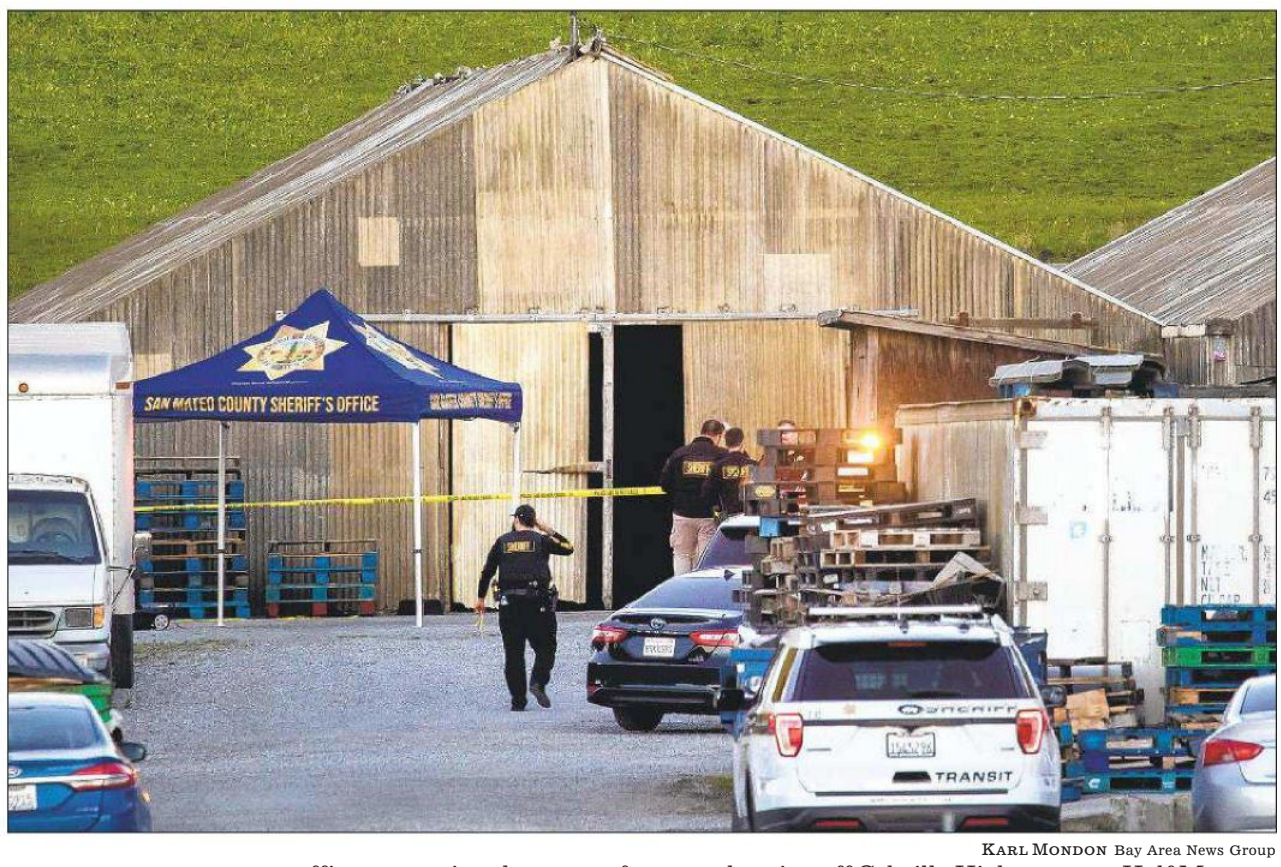
At $10 billion, the latest investment in OpenAI easily tops any of Microsoft's investments to date, according to data compiled by Bloomberg, including the $5 billion it spent to buy AT&T stock in 1999 in exchange for access to new cable networks, and the $1-billion stake it took in Comcast in 1997.

The dollar amount would also top all but three acquisitions Microsoft has made in recent years. Microsoft is seeking antitrust approval for a $69-billion purchase of video game maker Activision Blizzard, and in 2016 spent $26 billion to buy professional networking site LinkedIn. Last year, Microsoft completed its $20-billion purchase of Nuance Communications, an AI company specializing in voice recognition and related software and services in the healthcare field.

News of the investment comes less than a week after Microsoft said it was laying off 10,000 workers as a weakening economy crimps software demand. Microsoft noted in that announcement that it will still invest and hire in key priority areas. The software maker reports fiscal second-quarter earnings Tuesday.

Bass writes for Bloomberg.

Suspect held in slayings of 7 outside Half Moon Bay



KARL MONDON Bay Area News Group

LAW ENFORCEMENT officers examine the scene of a mass shooting off Cabrillo Highway near Half Moon Bay, Calif. The suspect, a 67-year-old man, and victims are believed to be workers at local farms or nurseries.

[**Half Moon,** from A1]
from one location to the next, shooting the unidentified victims at each site.

The motive for the shootings is still unknown, sheriff's officials said in a statement.

The shooting suspect, identified as Chunli Zhao, was spotted sitting in his car at the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office substation in Half Moon Bay at about 4:40 p.m., officials said.

Video from ABC 7 showed deputies taking a man to the ground in the parking lot. The man was wearing a white cap, vest and red long-sleeve shirt.

The weapon believed to have been used in the incident, a semiautomatic handgun, was found inside his car.

"With no past knowledge of this gunman or his motives, we are shook and very eager to gain more information from the authorities and their investigations," said Aaron Tung, the principal of Concord Farms, in a statement to The Times.

Concord Farms operates the mushroom farm on Cabrillo Highway where one of the shootings took place. "Our hearts," Tung added, "are with the victims, their families and the Chinese American community — from Half Moon Bay to Monterey Park."

Belinda Hernandez-Arriaga is founder and executive director of the San Mateo County nonprofit Ayudando Latinos a Soñar, which is based in Half Moon Bay. The organization works with farmworkers there. She said the ALAS team, which provides educational, mental health and social services, was on the Mountain Mushroom Farm, near one of the shooting sites, about an hour before the violence occurred. She said there are Spanish- and Mandarin-speaking farmworkers there.

"It's really hard to see this," she said. "Our farmworkers give so much to us, and to see this violence happening is just a tragedy."

Hernandez-Arriaga was at the family reunification center, set up by the Sheriff's Office on Main Street in Half Moon Bay, on Monday night, working to help those affected.

"We are all here waiting to hear together who were the victims," she said, noting "the impact this is going to have on our lives."

San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller was also at the center Monday night. Mueller said he was a witness to one family finding out that their relative was among those killed.

He estimated that, as of 7:30 p.m., there were 30 to 40 people at the center, many seeking counseling.

California has experienced three mass shootings in less than two weeks: The killing of six people at a home in Goshen, Calif., then the Monterey Park massacre at a dance studio, and now the Half Moon Bay incident.

"This is tragic on multiple levels," said San Mateo County Supervisor David Canepa. Noting that the victims were Chinese farmworkers, he said it was "horrific that it's a Lunar New Year [and] you have people massacred both in Monterey Park and in the Half Moon Bay area."

The Half Moon Bay shootings rank among the deadliest in the San Francisco Bay Area, topped in recent memory only by the 2021 incident when a worker for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority shot and killed nine co-workers at a light rail yard.

Monday's killings brought condemnation from California Gov. Gavin Newsom, who said on Twitter: "Tragedy upon tragedy." President Biden said through his spokesperson that federal authorities were offering assistance.

PAUL DUGINSKI Los Angeles Times

Assemblyman Marc Berman (D-Menlo Park) noted the scale of violence to hit California: "Two hours ago I joined my colleagues on the Capitol steps for a vigil for the victims of the shooting in Monterey Park," he said on Twitter. "Before we've even had a chance to mourn them, there is yet another mass shooting — this time in Half Moon Bay. In my district."

Officials said the suspect was cooperating with detectives.

Many in the rural region south of San Francisco were trying to come to terms with what happened.

"We don't have any idea what was the motive. All I know is that if someone can kill someone, they're not well," Hernandez-Arriaga said.

Times staff writers Rong-Gong Lin II, Luke Money and Christian Martinez contributed to this report.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Stocks rise as Fed action nears; earnings data ramp up

Investors grow more convinced that the central bank will be less aggressive in its next increase.

BY STAN CHOE AND ALEX VEIGA

Wall Street kicked off the week with a broad stock market rally Monday, as investors look ahead to a busy week of company earnings reports and grow more confident that the Federal Reserve will turn the screws on the economy less aggressively.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 1.2%, led by tech companies. The gains more than made up for the benchmark index's losses last week. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 0.8%, while the tech-heavy Nasdaq composite closed 2% higher. Small-company stocks also rose, pushing the Russell 2000 index up 1.3%.

Markets have been churning for weeks with sharp swings in both directions. On one hand, they've benefited from hopes that the nation's high inflation will continue to cool and get the Fed to loosen up on its blizzard of hikes to interest rates. On the other hand, they've taken hits on worries about a possible recession because of rate hikes already pushed through by the Fed.

Monday's gains follow a strong Friday, when stocks rallied on comments from a Fed official seen as a signal that the central bank may raise rates by just 0.25 of a percentage point next week. That would be a downshift from last month's 0.50-point increase and from four straight earlier hikes of 0.75 of a point.

Higher rates intentionally slow the economy by making it more expensive for businesses and households to borrow, so a step down would mean less added pressure. The Fed has already pulled its key overnight rate up to a range of 4.25% to 4.5% from virtually zero early last year, and traders are now betting on a nearly 99% probability that the Fed will raise rates by just a quarter of a point Feb. 1, according to CME Group.

The bigger question is how much further the Fed goes from there, and how long it will wait before it cuts interest rates. Such cuts can act like steroids for markets, and Wall Street is hoping they could arrive in the back half of this year. The Fed, meanwhile, has been adamant that it plans on holding rates high at least until 2024.

The yield on the two-year Treasury, which tends to track expectations for Fed movement, rose to 4.22% from 4.18% late Friday. The 10-year yield, which helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans, rose to 3.52% from 3.48%.

This year's rally, with the S&P 500 up more than 4% in January already, is largely a result of how deeply pessimistic Wall Street became late last year, said Ryan Detrick, chief market strategist at Carson Group. With so many investors expecting further losses in 2023, "it was extremely lopsided," he said, "and if you get any good news, you can get a bounce."

"Have we had great news? No," Detrick said. "But most of the inflation data is improving more than most people expected, which is opening the door for the Fed to take its foot off the pedal" and take it easier on rates.

More recently, concerns have also been rising on Wall Street about the strength of profits at companies because of the slowing economy and higher expenses. That's key because profits are one of the main levers that set stock prices.

Baker Hughes, which provides services and equipment at oil fields, fell 1.5% in choppy trading after reporting weaker profit and revenue for its latest quarter than expected, despite analysts flagging strong orders and other encouraging signals in the report.

This week will see more than seven dozen companies in the S&P 500 report their results for the last three months of 2022, including some of the most influential. Headliners include Microsoft on Tuesday and Tesla on Wednesday.

Such big tech-oriented companies have already been announcing layoffs to cut expenses after acknowledging they misread the boom coming out of the pandemic and grew too quickly. Spotify said Monday that it will cut 6% of its workforce; its shares rose 2.1%.

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	33,629.56	+254.07	+0.76	+1.46
S&P 500	4,019.81	+47.20	+1.19	+4.70
Nasdaq composite	11,364.41	+223.98	+2.01	+8.58
S&P 400	2,590.53	+32.07	+1.25	+6.59
Russell 2000	1,890.77	+23.43	+1.25	+7.35
EuroStoxx 50	4,150.82	+30.92	+0.75	+9.45
Nikkei (Japan)	26,906.04	+352.51	+1.33	+3.11
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	22,044.65	+393.67	+1.82	+11.44

Associated Press

Big tech stocks carry particular weight on Wall Street because they're some of the market's most valuable. That means movements for those stock prices hold bigger sway over the S&P 500 and other indexes than smaller stocks.

After soaring through the pandemic thanks to superlow interest rates and a surge in demand from suddenly homebound customers, they've been struggling over the last year as the Fed has been furiously raising rates.

More recently, though, the combination of moderating inflation, easing rate hikes and steady job growth is making technology companies and other high-valuation, growth-oriented companies attractive, said Peter Essele, head of portfolio management at Commonwealth Financial Network.

"This is a trend that has been forming over the past few weeks as we move from a value-led market which has existed in that high-inflation, increasing-inflation environment over the last 18 months," he said.

Tech stocks in the S&P 500 rose 2.3% on Monday, with chipmaker Advanced Micro Devices leading the pack with a 9.2% gain.

The S&P 500 advanced 47.20 points to 4,019.81. The Dow rose 254.07 points to 33,629.56, while the Nasdaq added 223.98 points, finishing at 11,364.41. The Russell 2000 rose 23.43 points to 1,890.77.

Meanwhile, another partisan battle in Washington about the nation's ability to borrow may add pressure on markets. Wall Street has seen this argument many times already, but if the two parties can't agree to allow the U.S. government to borrow more, economists say it could create chaos in markets and cause a recession on its own.

Crunch time appears to be in the summer, but each day that it grows closer increases the risk.

In Asian markets, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 added 1.3% despite Japan's finance minister saying the country faces an "unprecedentedly severe" financial situation after spending heavily to counter the pandemic and other troubles.

Several other markets in Asia were closed for the Lunar New Year holiday. In Europe, stock indexes were mixed and making only modest moves.

Choe and Veiga write for the Associated Press. AP writers Elaine Kurtenbach and Matt Ott contributed to this report.

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OPINION

EDITORIAL

Soaring utility bill? Blame the instability of fossil fuels

Natural gas price spikes underscore the need to shift quickly to renewable energy.

THOMAS KIENZLE Associated Press

A DRAMATIC increase in natural gas prices is being felt across California.

CALIFORNIANS ARE being hit with big increases in their utility bills this winter as natural gas prices spike dramatically, and it's exceptionally bad timing.

Inflation had already strained household finances. Utility rates had been rising in recent years, but now gas bills are expected to more than double this month, compared with a year ago. Wholesale natural gas prices have tripled since early December and are being passed on directly to customers. Southern California Gas Co. warned its 5.9 million customers to expect "shockingly high" bills, estimating that if they paid $130 a month last winter, the same level of usage could cost $315 this year.

This natural gas price shock should serve as a reminder of the inherent instability of fossil fuels, similar to the surge in gasoline prices last year after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It's the latest illustration of why there are more than just environmental reasons to quickly phase out natural gas, a fossil fuel that pollutes the air and is heating up the planet. It's better not just for our future to use electric heating and cooking appliances fueled by increasing amounts of renewable energy, but for our pocketbooks too.

With the potential for high prices to continue through the winter, SoCalGas is suggesting customers conserve by lowering their thermostats 3 to 5 degrees, turning down the temperature of their water heaters and washing their clothes in cold water, among other steps.

You can't blame utilities for offering tips, but residents are in this position of vulnerability and dependence because our infrastructure is built to promote fossil fuel use. The state has a much higher percentage of homes with gas appliances than other parts of the country, so Californians are particularly vulnerable when prices shoot up.

So much for the notion of "clean, safe and reliable" energy that the gas company and other fossil fuel companies have touted as they've sought to block climate action and fight efforts to electrify homes and businesses. The spike in natural gas prices is also largely responsible for increasing electricity bills for millions of Southern Californian Edison customers by an average of $11.80 in January, because the utility still relies on gas-fired power plants.

Conservation could certainly help in the short term, and there are customer assistance programs to cut your bill or spread out the costs over the year. But the long-term solution is to get off fossil fuels and divorce ourselves from their volatility.

Authorities say the price spikes are being caused by a confluence of factors, including below-normal temperatures across the West that increased natural gas consumption when there wasn't enough gas flowing or in storage to meet demand. That's in part due to repairs on the main pipeline that connects West Texas to Southern California.

Gas company officials say that the unusually high prices are largely out of their control and that they are not profiting from the spikes. But they mostly dismiss concerns that this episode suggests the gas delivery system cannot be counted on to deliver affordable energy for customers to heat their homes when they need it most.

Consumer advocates are calling for an investigation into the price spikes to ensure there is no profiteering or market manipulation. Meanwhile, state Public Utilities Commission officials are considering early distribution of the California climate credit to offer relief to millions of residents that normally see it on their bills in April.

If the health hazards of gas stoves or the disastrous 2015 blowout at the Aliso Canyon storage facility weren't reason enough, maybe the pain of these higher bills will provide policymakers with motivation to accelerate the transition to electric buildings powered by renewable energy and battery storage.

There is financial assistance on the way thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act signed by President Biden last year, which includes an array of credits, rebates and other incentives to help people replace their gas-fueled appliances with cleaner, more efficient, electric-powered heat pumps and induction stoves and take other steps to decarbonize their homes and businesses.

The sooner we can move beyond the unhealthful and outdated and unreliable ways of the past the better.

It's bad enough that so many of us have to depend on a polluting, planet-warming fossil fuel to cook our food, heat our water and keep our homes warm. We shouldn't also have to live in fear of soaring prices because there is no other option. Let's hope this condition won't last much longer.

After Falwell, who will be evangelicals' kingmaker?

This bloc of white American voters turned into Trumpists for years. What next?

LZ GRANDERSON

THANK GOD, the witch is dead.

That's what a student at Liberty University said back in 2020 in reaction to Jerry Falwell Jr. resigning as president of the Baptist college his father founded. She wasn't the only one on campus happy to see him go, but when you compare one of the most influential white evangelical Christians in the country to the Wicked Witch of the East, it stands out. I guess one could say instead of Dorothy's house, it was a sex scandal involving a male pool attendant in Miami that landed on him.

However, after Falwell Jr. was exposed as a reckless hypocrite who used his position to obtain political power in the name of God, the man he endorsed for president in 2016 received even more support from white Protestants in 2020: from 77% to 84%.

All of which brings me to former Vice President Mike Pence and his book tour stop at Cornerstone Church in San Antonio this Sunday.

Although not as powerful as Liberty University, the 22,000-member church is a significant political player. The founding pastor, John Hagee, has been a force in Texas conservative circles for some time, dating back to his endorsement of segregationist George Wallace for president in 1968.

Hagee has said God punished Jewish people with the Holocaust for disobeying him and that the Antichrist will be gay.

In 2021, Cornerstone hosted the "Reawaken America Tour," in which former national security advisor Michael Flynn said, "If we are going to have one nation under God, which we must, we have to have one religion. One nation under God, and one religion under God."

Yikes.

Hagee's son, Matt, is the lead pastor of the church, and is on video welcoming the merry band of conspiracy theorists in the pews.

Double yikes.

There are more than 2,000 churches in the San Antonio area, and Pence chose to push his book — and presumed 2024 bid for president — at the one that hosted a high-profile white nationalist event organized by election deniers. That seems more calculated than patriotic, but maybe that's just me.

There was significant blowback after Cornerstone hosted the Reawaken America Tour, and the church did issue an apology saying it isn't "associated with this organization and does not endorse their views," as if the views of Flynn and that pillow guy were a great unknown.

Now here's where things get really interesting.

With Falwell Jr. vanquished, white evangelicals are in the market for a new kingmaker. Billy Graham, Ralph Reed, Falwell Sr. ... there's a blueprint out there and, more importantly, an opening.

Last week, in response to the lack of endorsements from evangelical leaders for his third presidential bid, Trump said it was "signs of disloyalty." In promoting Pence's appearance on Sunday, Cornerstone posted this on its website: "Loyalty is a Vice President's first duty; but there is a greater one — to God and Constitution."

Damn, that's good.

Didn't even mention his name. Didn't have to. To quote Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.): "The entire nation knows who is responsible for that day."

And just like that, Cornerstone, the megachurch that endorsed Trump and hosted "Stop the Steal" speakers is now Team Pence as the Hagees evoke God in an attempt to reposition themselves politically. As if insurrectionists weren't chanting, "Let's Go Brandon," from Cornerstone's pews barely two years ago. And you know what? It might work.

Even after learning Falwell Jr. may have been pressured into an 2016 endorsement — Trump's former attorney claims to have prevented racy photos of the Falwells from becoming public — even more white evangelicals voted for Trump in 2020.

"Come out, come out, wherever you are" is what Glinda told the Munchkins after Dorothy's house fell on the wicked witch. It also serves as a pretty good cattle call for ambitious church leaders looking to become the Republican Party's next kingmaker.

LETTERS

RMG News

FIRST RESPONDERS help people injured in a shooting at Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park on Saturday.

The acceptance of mass murder

Re "10 die in mass shooting," Jan. 23

None of us can claim to be shocked anymore when one of these "2nd Amendment celebrations" known as mass shootings occur.

A reasonable person would have expected something to have been done after after 6- and 7-year-olds were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. But no.

The thing is, in the United States, these shootings are acceptable. If they weren't acceptable, we wouldn't accept them. But we do.

Shame on us.

WILLIAM ELMELUND
West Hollywood

::

"This kind of thing doesn't happen in my neighborhood," one individual in Monterey Park was quoted as saying. This is a statement that has been repeated after so many mass shootings.

Another person revealed that he started carrying a gun with him after a Texas mass shooting, evidently in the belief that we can stop gun violence by arming ourselves.

The probability of a mass shooting in any of our neighborhoods is getting higher. We need to realize this and work on a solution.

Conversely, the likelihood of solving this tragic problem by carrying more guns is low. More gun possession in our communities increases the probability of violence.

We, as imperfect human beings, possess lethal weapons that are being used to kill ourselves and others with a frequency that is terrifying.

JOAN HORN
Carlsbad

::

We attach too much importance to motive in a shooting. The point is there's a person with a grudge who has access to a weapon of mass destruction. That's it.

Anyone can buy a gun, legally or not.

There will always be people who are angry and want others to suffer as they have. It's the gun part where we have the power to make changes.

The politicians could stop this proliferation of easily accessible guns if they had the courage.

SANDRA TRUTT
Los Angeles

::

Enough is enough. When are we going to ban guns? The state of California ought to take extreme measures to restrict or ban guns, the 2nd Amendment be damned.

How many thousands of people are going to be massacred, including schoolchildren, before we admit that the 2nd Amendment is an arcane piece of the Constitution that helps no one?

No other peer country has given their citizens a constitutional right to own guns, and no other peer country has our level of murder and gun violence — not even close.

This is not rocket science. We are awash in guns and gun violence.

DAVID TEMPEST
Mar Vista

::

Willy Sutton, when asked why he robbed banks, replied, "Because that's where the money is."

If we asked, "Why do we have these mass killings?" the reply would be, "Because we have guns."

And if we asked Congress, "Why don't we have proper gun laws?" the answer would be, "Because that's where the money is."

TED BACINO
Palm Springs

The sordid history of 'thin blue line'

Re "LAPD bans 'thin blue line' symbols," Jan. 21

Those Los Angeles Police Department officers displaying "thin blue line" flags — whether well-meaningly or not — clearly have not seen the 1988 Errol Morris documentary that coined the phrase. It was used by the prosecutor in Dallas County, Texas, in a 1970s cop-killing case as a reference to police as the thin line of defense preventing society from descending into chaos.

But as the documentary ultimately showed, the district attorney and Dallas police detectives in the case sent the wrong man to prison for life, while the killer went on to commit other crimes (including in California), for which he was eventually executed.

Thanks to the documentary and its exposure of police corruption, art dictated life, and the falsely convicted man was released after having served more than 10 years in prison.

VINCENT BROOK
Los Angeles

::

I see far more American flags in photos of right-wing extremist rallies than "thin blue line" flags. So, are we going to start banning the public display of American flags by Los Angeles Police Department officers next? Of course not.

If extremists have hijacked the meaning of the "thin blue line" flag, the braver action would be to work on restoring its original meaning instead of caving in and banning its public use.

I am proud to have blue-line stickers on my cars, and I am a lifelong Democrat.

SANDY HICKOFF
Irvine

::

Before becoming a symbol of hate and intolerance, for centuries the swastika was a religious symbol representing well-being.

It's sad to see a symbol that's meant to represent fallen police officers being co-opted by the far right. Even sadder, but also commendable, was LAPD Chief Michel Moore's decision to remove what has now become a symbol of hate and intolerance.

TIM WEILER
Laguna Woods

::

I was in law enforcement for more than 30 years.

Moore should resign immediately instead of asking to stay on at the LAPD after his term ends in June. He is a disgrace to his department, his uniform and most importantly the men and women he commands.

THOMAS BREGENZER
Lake Ariel, Pa.

HOW TO WRITE TO US

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JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

COMMUNITY MEMBERS gather at a vigil for the victims of a gunman who attacked a ballroom dance studio on Saturday.

THE MONTEREY PARK SHOOTING HITS HOME

The west San Gabriel Valley community has long been precious for Asian Americans. Now, it's another place where we feel unsafe.

By James Zarsadiaz

FOR THOUSANDS of fellow Asian Americans, Monterey Park is our home — even if we don't live there.

For immigrants and their children, the location of Saturday's tragedy that killed 11 people was personal and familiar: a dance hall during festive Lunar New Year celebrations. And more so, it was Monterey Park — a town whose Asian strip malls, stores and houses of worship reflect the everyday lives of our ancestors who chose to put down roots in the United States.

Similar to how Grant Avenue and Mott Street served as lifelines for the Chinese in San Francisco and New York, respectively, during the early 20th century, so have Garvey Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard in Monterey Park been lifelines for this community for decades. These are not just neighborhoods; to many, these are sacred sites of cultural preservation and celebration. Monterey Park represents Asian America, today — how far we've come and how we've built community despite encountering barrier after barrier. This is part of why Saturday hit so hard.

How did Monterey Park become an Asian American hub? From the mid-1800s until the 1960s, foreign- and U.S.-born Asians were often forced to live in less desirable neighborhoods. Low wages and bigotry relegated Asians to places including those areas that became Chinatown. At the same time, these ethnic enclaves protected these residents from critics and racial agitators who questioned their presence in America.

When immigration restrictions relaxed after the 1965 Hart-Celler Act, newer waves of Asian settlers acquired incomes that afforded entry into more fashionable parts of the city or in the suburbs. Money, along with increased tolerance of Asian Americans, allowed settlement away from historic Chinatown, Filipinotown and Japantown. Though those enclaves still exist, for the last 30 years these communities have no longer been confined to the city.

Monterey Park reflects this expansion. During the 1950s and 1960s, a small stream of Japanese Americans settled in the community, a rarity during an era of restrictive housing covenants. People of Chinese descent soon followed, thanks to Frederic Hsieh. Hsieh — a Chinese investor — purchased property in Monterey Park in the 1970s. He declared it the future "Chinese Beverly Hills," garnering attention from would-be immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Then in the 1980s, some in the area chastised Asian immigrants for not assimilating. Asians quickly found out that their presence was not welcomed by many, as they faced battles over allowing Chinese business signage and efforts to make English the official language of places such as Monterey Park.

After a period of growing pains, the temperature cooled down. Many residents unhappy with the demographic changes left the suburb. By the early 1990s, Monterey Park became majority Asian, with Chinese culture on full display and an array of Asian businesses to patronize. The suburb joined its urban counterparts as an established Chinatown, embodying how millions of Asian Americans live today — inside or close to an ethno-burb where access to Asian goods, services and culture is within a stone's throw.

Saturday's mass shooting in Monterey Park rattled Asian America. It triggered feelings the community has been grappling with for the last three years or, arguably, the last two centuries. Was the shooting an act of anti-Asian bigotry? Why did it happen here? These are natural reactions given the long list of violent crimes committed toward Asian Americans, often in unexpected places: the 2021 Atlanta spa shootings; the killing of Vicha Ratanapakdee in San Francisco the same year; the bus stabbing of an 18-year-old Asian woman in Bloomington, Ind., this month, just to name a few.

To be sure, violence — whether or not it is driven by prejudice — happens everywhere in the U.S. But given the political climate since 2020, it is hard for Asian Americans to not automatically think that hate is the force behind any attack in our communities.

While the motives of the Star Ballroom Dance Studio shooter are still being investigated, what is clear is that Asian Americans remain a population forced to live on high alert — even in places we've understood to be safe and comfortable. Now this includes Monterey Park.

JAMES ZARSADIAZ is associate professor of history at the University of San Francisco. He is the author of "Resisting Change in Suburbia," a book about Asian American suburbanization and the east San Gabriel Valley.

Opioids don't do enough for chronic pain

Patients need better options that go beyond medications.

By Haider Warraich

CHRONIC PAIN affects 1 in 6 people in the United States and around the world and is the most common cause of disability. Yet medicine's desperate attempts to treat chronic pain sparked the opioid epidemic. And while many promising non-opioid therapies exist, some of them newly developed, patients face innumerable barriers in accessing them.

To overcome the opioid epidemic, it is not enough to just reduce how many opioids physicians prescribe. We need to be able to offer patients evidence-based alternatives. Yet for that to happen, we must also better understand the fundamental nature of chronic pain, which is as much an emotion we feel in our minds as it is a physical sensation experienced by our body.

Acceptance and commitment therapy and exercise are both safer and more effective for chronic pain than opioids, which can actually increase how much those with chronic pain hurt.

"As a hospice nurse, I feel I have a pretty good understanding of pain management," said Jeanne Dietrich-Harrison, whose son died of an opioid overdose last year after he was prescribed the drugs for chronic pain that resulted from pancreatitis. "Even with dying patients we use a multidimensional approach, not just opioids."

Unfortunately, services such as physical and cognitive therapy were hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the closure of many pain rehabilitation facilities. And given that there are only 74 certified pain rehab centers in the entire United States, the need and demand far exceed the supply of these potent remedies even in the best of times.

Advances that seek to defang the emotional and psychological aspects of pain offer a ray of hope for those who hurt endlessly. Online multidisciplinary programs have been shown to be effective for chronic pain. Other innovations include telemedicine for harm reduction services for patients who are prescribed opioids; expansion of online group therapy and pain education sessions; and greater flexibility in home delivery of prescriptions.

A new form of cognitive therapy called pain reprocessing therapy — which according to researchers teaches people that "the brain actively constructs primary chronic pain in the absence of tissue damage and that reappraising the causes and threat value of pain can reduce or eliminate it" — led to 52% of back pain patients being pain-free, compared with just 16% of those who received conventional care.

The search for alternative treatments for chronic pain has begun to push the very boundary of what constitutes treatment. In November 2021, the Food and Drug Administration approved the first virtual reality system shown in randomized clinical trials to help people with chronic lower back pain. The system incorporates techniques such as distraction, relaxation, behavior modification and increasing bodily awareness, in daily virtual reality sessions over an eight-week course.

As we face this mounting opioid crisis, it will be critical to not repeat prior mistakes. The major reason patients with chronic pain have suffered is because they have been treated by a system that prioritized fast prescriptions or profitable procedures, neither of which actually relieve chronic pain. The White House unveiled its National Drug Control Strategy in April, which while quite comprehensive, does little about ensuring patients with chronic pain receive broader access to interdisciplinary pain management.

Both the federal government and individual states should push public and private insurance programs to provide more ready access to interdisciplinary and alternative pain care, and should perhaps even consider mandating coverage for certain services.

At the same time, it is important to revisit practices that offer limited benefits. For example, according to physician Steven Atlas, spinal fusion surgeries have "become the poster child for expensive, risky, and unnecessary back surgery," and a Medicare advisory committee gave an extremely tepid assessment of the evidence in support of the procedures. Yet Medicare and other insurers continue to waste billions of dollars per year on them.

Many living with pain have found working from home a boon, and employers should continue such flexibility for disabled people and their caregivers.

Funding for research into innovative approaches for chronic pain needs to be increased, but at the same time, the FDA needs to maintain a high level of scrutiny to ensure only the safest and most effective therapies are promoted.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently updated its guidelines for chronic pain. The agency removed certain restrictions on opioid prescriptions and recommends non-opioid therapies as front-line treatments for chronic pain, but the guidelines could have provided clinicians with more guidance about how best to incorporate these options in the care of patients with chronic pain.

People in chronic pain have to show great resilience. They need medical providers who can offer innovative, holistic approaches — beyond medications — that have been shown to deliver relief.

HAIDER WARRAICH is a physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and is the author of "The Song of Our Scars: The Untold Story of Pain."

Biden should admit to his mistakes with documents

JONAH GOLDBERG

THERE'S AN understandable compulsion in the media and among Democrats to emphasize the differences between Joe Biden's classified documents scandal and Donald Trump's.

The two cases are different in many important respects. The most significant is obviously that the former president refused to cooperate with the National Archives and Justice Department until a search of his home was deemed necessary. Meanwhile, Biden's team has endeavored to highlight the fact they've been very cooperative, inviting various searches, including of his home on Friday — which revealed even more documents with classified markings, reportedly dating to his days in the Senate.

That's all fine. But there are two similarities that can't be "messaged" away. The first similarity has been widely discussed in the media and acknowledged by many of the president's most ardent Democratic supporters: He had stuff he shouldn't have had in places they didn't belong. Yes, Trump had more documents and possibly more sensitive ones. But the underlying misdeed is the same.

The second similarity has largely gone unnoticed, as the Daily Beast's Matt Lewis has noted. Very much like Trump, Joe Biden has a very difficult time admitting error.

On Thursday, Biden said he had "no regrets" regarding the classified document mess. Exactly one year earlier, he said, "I make no apologies" for how he pulled U.S. forces out of Afghanistan.

This was after he'd assured the public that the withdrawal would be secure and orderly. "There's going to be no circumstance where you see people being lifted off the roof of [an] embassy of the United States from Afghanistan. It is not at all comparable [to Vietnam]."

On a human level, never mind as a matter of common sense, it's impossible to believe that Biden had no regrets about Afghanistan or how this classified document mess has unfolded.

And as a political matter, this has been a fiasco. Does anyone believe he doesn't wince every time he sees that "60 Minutes" clip of himself being shocked at Trump's "irresponsible" handling of classified material?

Has the White House's response really been flawless? On Jan. 12, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre assured the public that "the search [for documents] is complete." That was before more documents showed up in his home and garage.

Biden's stubbornness is only part of the problem. No doubt lawyers and political advisors are reinforcing his instinct to not give an inch to the media. After the post-Afghanistan withdrawal news conference, Biden asked a friend how he did. The friend said "great." "Yeah, but the press is going to kill me," Biden replied, "I'm f— no matter what I say."

There's also the larger political culture in which partisans believe any admission that bolsters the enemy is intolerable. Indeed, Biden is hardly the first politician to struggle with admitting mistakes. Trump took it to cartoonish extremes. "I fully think apologizing is a great thing, but you have to be wrong...," he once said. "I will absolutely apologize sometime in the distant future if I'm ever wrong."

I've long thought that Trump's insistence that his infamous call with the president of Ukraine was "perfect" helped drive the effort to impeach him. Politically, claims of perfection enrage critics and proving imperfection is a lot easier than proving an admitted mistake was an impeachable outrage.

Therein lies Biden's opportunity. As Lewis notes, "Biden was elected to be the opposite of Trump." That's why Biden frequently falls back on one of his favorite folksy rhetorical refrains: promising to "always level with the American people and tell it to you straight."

Biden would be much better off if followed his own advice — and I don't just mean saying "mistakes were made." It would be much easier to argue that what he did isn't as bad as what Trump did, if first he admitted his own missteps (and not for nothing: The legal standard isn't "Is this worse than what Trump did?" but "Does this violate the law?").

Saying he has no regrets is not very different from saying what he did was perfect. And Biden's hand-waving dismissal that "people know I take classified documents and classified information seriously" isn't very far from Trump's favorite lead-in for all kinds of groundless assertions: "Everybody knows...."

Either Biden is lying about telling it straight or he honestly believes he is. If it's the latter, then he's delusional.

I think there's a deep hunger among voters for politicians to admit mistakes. Biden ran for office promising transparency, honesty, competence and normality. The way he's handled this documents mess breaks all those promises.

@JonahDispatch

Will their bipartisan rapport make a difference?

[**Politicos,** from A1]
thousands of ballots had yet to be counted. But, she informed him, the odds of beating her rival, Rick Caruso, were looking good.

"I bet you didn't know he contributed to me," McCarthy teased her.

"Oh, yes, I knew," shot back Bass, whose campaign had gleefully and repeatedly tied Caruso to McCarthy and other Republicans in her advertising.

"We put you in all our mail. We put you in all our TV," she said as they laughed at the thought of McCarthy starring in Bass' attack ads.

It's hard to imagine in these times of bitter partisan antagonism, but the top House Republican and the Democratic mayor of Los Angeles are friends. Not in the Washington sense, where "my friend" borders on insult, but a genuine affinity that has spanned two decades and both coasts.

The next two years will test whether that kind of personal chemistry can still yield substantive accomplishments. Bass' hope to win additional federal support for the city's battle against homelessness could be stymied by McCarthy's political vulnerabilities to an ascendant Republican right wing that sees deep-blue cities largely as rhetorical punching bags.

McCarthy has kept up the partisan attacks on Democrats, including fellow Californians such as Reps. Adam B. Schiff (D-Burbank) and Eric Swalwell (D-Dublin). Still, Bass, who returned to Washington last week for the first time since becoming mayor, is undeterred.

When McCarthy finally won the speakership after a protracted 15 rounds of balloting, Bass texted congratulations and mentioned her upcoming visit.

"I'm coming to collect," she told him.

TOM WILLIAMS CQ-Roll Call

REPS. KAREN BASS (D-Los Angeles) and Kevin McCarthy (R-Bakersfield) talk as Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) looks on before a 9/11 remembrance ceremony on Sept. 11, 2012.

Bass' trip to the nation's capital focused on the urgent stakes of Los Angeles' homelessness crisis. In addition to meeting with White House and Cabinet officials, she attended the U.S. Conference of Mayors winter meeting with an eye toward hearing from other big-city mayors about what's working in their locales.

Last month, President Biden announced a goal of reducing homelessness nationally by 25% in the next two years. Bass has been quick to point out that a big reduction in Los Angeles would go a long way toward hitting that objective.

Bass campaigned for mayor stressing her connections with the Biden administration and how those could pay off for L.A.

This month, Susan Rice, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, joined the mayor in visiting skid row and other areas of the city with significant homeless populations, talking to outreach workers and unhoused residents.

The mayor sees particular urgency to tap into federal resources now, aware that if the Republicans win the White House in 2024, they may be less solicitous toward a big city than the Biden administration. Her predecessor, Eric Garcetti, spent many months unsuccessfully courting Trump administration officials for more funding and material support to address homelessness.

Bass hopes she'll be able to deftly navigate Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations for increased federal housing assistance and secure more healthcare support from agencies such as Health and Human Services. Last week, she met with federal department heads including Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas as well as White House senior advisor Mitch Landrieu, who is the former mayor of New Orleans. She also visited the White House on Friday.

At a Conference of Mayors session on affordable housing, Bass came in late and introduced herself as Los Angeles mayor "as of a month and a few days ago." The room gave her a round of applause.

While in the nation's capital, Bass didn't visit Congress, which may prove to be a challenge in her quest for federal help. Los Angeles would benefit from more money to expand housing vouchers for low-income Angelenos and to address the underlying causes of homelessness, but House Republicans are focused on steep spending cuts rather than expanding safety-net programs.

Bass' hopes for blunting that threat may come down to a nearly 20-year-old friendship with the new speaker.

They met in the California Legislature. McCarthy was the top Assembly Republican and Bass was a first-term legislator. After Bass was appointed to a leadership role by then-Speaker Fabian Núñez, McCarthy witnessed her corral Democratic lawmakers and shepherd the Democratic agenda on the floor. He predicted she'd eventually nab the top Assembly post.

"I told her one day she would be speaker, but she didn't believe me. And she became speaker," McCarthy told the Hill when Biden considered choosing Bass as his running mate in 2020.

"She's got a lot of natural ability. ... Even though we have a difference of opinion, we can always talk. We can always work through and find common ground," he said.

McCarthy's office did not respond to requests for comment for this article.

Mutual colleagues said the traits that propelled both Bass and McCarthy to leadership roles — their knack for reading people and making them feel heard, their undogmatic approach — also fostered their friendship.

"What they have in common is they both love politics," said Carrie Kohns, Bass' former congressional chief of staff. "They're drawn to the workings of it — almost like a chess match, [though] not as if they see it as a game. It's more that I think they have an appreciation for the process and the systems and understanding how the levers work."

The state Capitol fostered a sense of small-town familiarity among lawmakers. While there was plenty of sniping across the aisle, the requirement that existed then for a supermajority to pass a budget made deal-making between Democrats and Republicans a necessity.

"When we were all in Sacramento together, there was a lot more camaraderie amongst all of us in the Assembly on a bipartisan basis," said Republican former Assemblyman Doug LaMalfa, now a congressman from Richvale.

Bass became Assembly speaker just as the Great Recession decimated California's finances, requiring her to travel to Washington multiple times to lobby for help. McCarthy, who by then was ascending the GOP hierarchy in Congress, was "receptive," Bass recalled, but also blunt about the partisan realities.

In 2010, Bass was elected to Congress, one of nine freshman Democrats vastly outnumbered by 87 Republicans newly elected in that year's tea party wave. Former Rep. Jeff Denham (R-Turlock), who served with Bass in the Legislature, recalled the new congresswoman approaching him during orientation with the small band of Democratic freshmen in tow.

"Karen brought [them] over to me and said, 'Can we introduce everybody together?' " Denham said.

"When she came into Congress, I think members that had served with her in Sacramento knew that they were going to have a friend and were actually excited about her coming in."

There was an element of political savvy in preserving those old Sacramento ties.

"She was very conscious about having a constructive relationship and connection with Kevin, because she's smart," said Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg, who headed the state Senate when she ran the Assembly. "She knew that it would be good for her as she was starting in Congress and good for the district."

One of Bass' main issues in Sacramento was increasing funding for foster youth programs. When she arrived in Washington, her hope was to tackle that issue from a federal vantage point. But she did not receive a warm reception when she tried to find Republicans to join a new congressional caucus focused on foster youth.

"The environment was so partisan. Nobody would pay attention to me," Bass said.

Seeking McCarthy's help, she learned he was planning a trip to Eastern Europe to commemorate former President Reagan's 100th birthday. So she proposed a trade.

"I said I would go on a trip if he recruited Republicans to come to the Foster Care Caucus, and he did that," she said.

McCarthy even let Bass use his personal conference room to host caucus meetings, Kohns said.

In private conversation, they would promote each other's accomplishments — even when the other wasn't around, recalled Mike Villines, a former GOP assemblyman who is close to both. McCarthy was especially effusive about Bass' work chairing the subcommittee on Africa, telling Villines that African heads of state would seek an audience with Bass when visiting Washington.

Bass and McCarthy, along with other veterans of the Legislature, made efforts to replicate the pleasantries of their statehouse days. The two took turns organizing bipartisan dinners for Sacramento alumni.

As the Obama administration came to a close and the early years of the Trump presidency began, McCarthy continued to attend, even as the number of GOP guests began to dwindle, said Rep. Norma Torres (D-Pomona).

"He always attended, and he was very nice and cordial to all of us," Torres said. "Oftentimes he would be the only Republican sitting at the table, and when that started to happen, she realized that we were endangering him more than we were helping."

There is always wistfulness for the bygone days of bipartisan comity — which is often exaggerated in the rear-view mirror — but cross-party collegiality seems especially quaint these days. The divisiveness of the Trump presidency and the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol have sunk the parties' relationships to a new low.

While McCarthy poured most of his efforts into building a Republican majority — including embracing Trump weeks after the Jan. 6 incursion — his relationships with prominent Democrats deteriorated.

By the end of the Trump presidency, he and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) were openly hostile. The Democratic leader derided McCarthy as "such a moron" while he made "firing Pelosi" a centerpiece of his midterm messaging.

Bass, a close ally of Pelosi, was able to maintain some levity with McCarthy by ribbing him about antics coming from his caucus, Kohns said. He'd jab back about Democrats' incessant salvos against Trump.

"They would tease each other about the nastiness of the moment," Kohns said.

That rapport forged in Sacramento is much harder to replicate under current partisan pressures, said Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Torrance), who overlapped with Bass and McCarthy in the statehouse.

"There were a number of Republicans [in Sacramento who] weren't crazy and they weren't radical," Lieu said. "He has a caucus now, where he does have a number of extreme and radical members. And given the incredibly thin majority that they have, they are able to exert an outsize influence."

While that may complicate Bass' hopes for increased federal funds for Los Angeles, Lieu predicted McCarthy will be "fairly helpful to help stop Republicans from doing stupid stuff against Los Angeles or other cities."

"It's hard to intentionally discriminate against a city," Lieu added, noting that many federal dollars are allocated by a formula. "And I do think Karen will be very forceful in making sure that that doesn't happen against Los Angeles."

Núñez, who preceded Bass as speaker and now works as a lobbyist, said Bass would get "as good an audience as anyone" in making the case for Los Angeles to McCarthy. She may end up proving helpful to him as well, he said.

"There will be times when Kevin is going to look in the House to garner votes from Democrats," Núñez said.

"Karen is someone who could be very skillful at finding how to identify people" the GOP speaker could work with.

The bipartisan friendship between Bass and McCarthy "is rare, but not as rare as you may think," Núñez said. But few politicians want to publicize those bonds.

"This is the era of finger-pointing," he said. "If you don't demonize the other side, something's wrong with you. ... [But] at some point the parties have to govern. And it's important that people develop relationships."

Democratic rival announces bid for Sinema's Senate seat

BY JONATHAN J. COOPER

PHOENIX — Democratic Rep. Ruben Gallego of Arizona, a liberal firebrand and prominent Latino lawmaker, announced Monday that he'll challenge independent U.S. Sen. Kyrsten Sinema in 2024, becoming the first candidate to jump into the race and setting up a potential three-way contest.

Gallego said he would fight for ordinary people who struggle to make ends meet and who have lost faith in politicians. He said he and Sinema both come from "modest to poor means" but have taken different paths in Congress.

"I'm better for this job than Kyrsten Sinema because I haven't forgotten where I came from," Gallego told the Associated Press in an exclusive interview. "I think she clearly has forgotten where she came from. Instead of meeting with the people that need help, she meets with the people that are already powerful."

Gallego, a 43-year-old military veteran first elected to Congress in 2014, had made no secret of his interest in challenging Sinema, a longtime rival in Arizona politics who has been a roadblock and irritant to Democrats during President Biden's term. She left the Democratic Party in December, registering as an independent and saying that she doesn't "fit well into a traditional party system." She has not said whether she plans to run for a second term.

Although no Republican has entered the race, potential contenders include former gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake, former U.S. Senate candidate Blake Masters and Pinal County Sheriff Mark Lamb — all of whom are closely aligned with former President Trump. Karrin Taylor Robson, a housing developer who lost to Lake in last year's primary, and former Gov. Doug Ducey are also possible contenders.

A three-way race, coupled with the risk that Sinema and the eventual Democratic nominee would split the vote, would complicate the party's already uphill battle to maintain control of the Senate in 2024. Democrats will be forced to defend 23 seats, including Sinema's and two others held by independents, compared with just 10 seats for Republicans.

With tough and expensive races on the horizon, it remains unclear just how firmly the Democratic establishment and major donors will line up against Sinema, who has voted for most Democratic legislation even as she's stood in the way of major priorities for the White House, congressional leaders and the progressive movement.

"I'm assuming that they will be with us because we are going to run the winning campaign and because, at the end of the day, if you look at where Arizonans are going to be, they're going to be with us and not with her," Gallego told the AP.

A spokeswoman for Sinema, Hannah Hurley, declined to comment on Gallego's announcement.

Gallego, an acerbic presence on social media who is quick to take down rivals from both parties, floated the idea of challenging Sinema to raise money last year and has for weeks been publicly assembling a team of advisors, hiring Democratic campaign veterans with experience working on tough swing-state Senate races in Arizona, Georgia and Pennsylvania.

He announced his campaign with an online video that shows him talking to veterans at an American Legion post in Guadalupe, a Latino and Indigenous community just outside Phoenix.

TOM WILLIAMS Associated Press

REP. RUBEN GALLEGO (D-Ariz.) is a 43-year-old veteran who was first elected to Congress in 2014.

The son of immigrants from Mexico and Colombia, Gallego was raised in Chicago by a single mother after his father was imprisoned for dealing drugs. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Reserves while he was on an involuntary break from Harvard University. He wrote in a 2021 book, "They Called Us Lucky," that he was asked to leave Harvard during his sophomore year, when he partied too much, his grades slipped and he broke unspecified rules. He was later allowed to return.

He fought in Iraq in 2005 in a unit that sustained heavy casualties, and he struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder after returning. He moved to Arizona to join his Harvard girlfriend, who had become active in Democratic politics in the state. The couple married in 2010 and divorced in 2017, a month before their son was born. His ex-wife, Kate Gallego, is now the mayor of Phoenix.

Gallego was elected in 2010 to the state Legislature, where Sinema also served during one of his two terms. In 2014, he won a bitter congressional primary, toppling a dynastic figure in the Phoenix Latino community. He represents an overwhelmingly Democratic district that includes the Black and Latino neighborhoods of south and west Phoenix.

In Congress, he has focused on veterans and military issues.

Sinema has modeled her political approach on the maverick style of the late Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona, who alienated the grassroots of his party by sometimes crossing the aisle to work with Democrats. She's become a fierce advocate of bipartisan compromise in an era when extreme partisanship has made it much more difficult.

She has been at the center of many of the biggest congressional deals of Biden's presidency, including a bipartisan infrastructure package and a landmark bill to legally protect same-sex marriages. But she's also become estranged from many Democrats, who blame her for voting down progressive priorities, such as a minimum wage hike, and watering down others, such as Biden's social spending initiatives.

Cooper writes for the Associated Press.

CALIFORNIA

Photographs by Allen J. Schaben Los Angeles Times

MOURNERS place flowers near 11 blue wooden hearts, one for each fatality in the mass shooting, at a vigil Monday in Monterey Park.

‘We can get through this’ crisis

More than 100 gather in Monterey Park, united by grief over the massacre on Saturday

By Jeong Park, Carlos De Loera, Ruben Vives and Thomas Curwen

As investigators combed Southern California for anything to help explain the deadliest U.S. mass shooting in months, more than 100 mourners gathered Monday night at a vigil in Monterey Park that served as a sober contrast to the season’s usual Lunar New Year celebrations.

Gathering in the small public park in front of the civic center, they stood silently absorbed in the grief that had brought them together. Strangers now linked in sorrow, they sought solace and solidarity in one another’s company and in the tacit belief that the aftermath of tragedy should not be experienced alone.

Chuching Wang, president of the Taiwan Benevolent Assn. of California and co-organizer of the vigil, said the idea for the gathering came after speaking with friends who described their frustration that a time of joy and family during the Lunar New Year had been over-

[See **Vigil,** B2]

THE VIGIL brought more than 100 people to a small public park in front of the Monterey Park civic center to pay their respects to the 11 killed and nine wounded.

Tran was oldest suspect in a mass shooting

By Salvador Hernandez and Hayley Smith

The gunman who opened fire in a Monterey Park ballroom Saturday and killed 11 people is the oldest person to carry out such an attack in the U.S., according to research.

The deadly shooting was as horrifying as it was rare.

“This is definitely unique,” said James Densley, president and co-founder of the Violence Project, a nonprofit organization that tracks mass shootings, which the group defines as those involving four or more people killed in a public space.

By that definition, 72-year-old Hemet resident Huu Can Tran — the man identified by authorities as the gunman — would be the oldest person in recent history to carry out a mass shooting, and only the second in their 70s to carry out such an attack, according to the Violence Project. The organization’s database dates to 1966.

Less unique is the possibility that the shooter was motivated by a personal vendetta, Densley said.

Tran is believed to have frequented Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park, where he opened fire on at least 20 people, and the Lai Lai Ballroom in Alhambra, where he was later disarmed. Law enforcement sources told The Times that detectives were focusing on his prior interactions at both studios, and the possibility that jealousy and a prior relationship may have played a role in the shooting.

About one-third of mass shooters have a previous history of domestic violence,

[See **Killer,** B2]

Rains leave L.A. County flood-control dams at risk

Another intense storm could unleash new debris surges on foothill communities.

By Louis Sahagún

Now that the shock of a series of January storms has worn off, Los Angeles County officials face a herculean chore: Five reservoirs along south-facing San Gabriel Mountain slopes are filled with so much debris and soupy mud that they pose a flood risk to the communities below.

Another intense storm, they say, could unleash new surges of dirt, toppled trees and boulders down canyons stripped of their binding vegetation by the 2020 Bobcat fire, sending chocolate-colored floodwaters over the dams and into the cities of Arcadia, Sierra Madre, Pacoima, Sun Valley and Sunland.

An urgent concern is emptying the reservoir behind 96-year-old Santa Anita Dam of about 600,000 cubic yards of muck more than 80 feet deep. Two of the three valves that control releases of stormwater from the 20-story-tall dam are blocked with silt.

“It could flood, and we’re busting our tails to make sure that doesn’t happen,” said Sterling Klippel, principal stormwater engineer at the L.A. County Department of Public Works.

Built in 1927, the structure is a critical component of a sprawling network of 14 dams, 487 miles of flood-control channels, 3,330 miles of

[See **Dams,** B4]

Mel Melcon Los Angeles Times

WORKERS at Santa Anita Dam. Two of the three valves that control releases of stormwater from the 96-year-old, 20-story-tall structure are blocked with silt.

COVID numbers improve, spurring optimism

State is eluding winter wave of infections and hospitalizations, but caution is still urged.

By Luke Money and Rong-Gong Lin II

In the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, winter holidays were marred by a pair of devastating waves that ripped through California, sending case counts soaring, residents to the hospital in droves and, ultimately, leaving thousands dead.

But the third winter seems to have escaped that fate. A late autumn upswing in transmission, which picked up steam after Thanksgiving, began to dissipate in mid- to late December instead of becoming the runaway train public health officials had feared. And in a stark departure from previous years, COVID-19 metrics have continued to improve in the weeks since.

Officials emphasize that the danger is not past — especially for those at higher risk of developing severe illness.

There’s also a chance another problematic variant could emerge. Officials are keeping a close eye on XBB.1.5, which has been described as the most infectious edition of the virus yet.

But the fact that California navigated what was, for many, the closest thing to a normal holiday season since 2019, without a record-setting spike in infections or surge in hospitalizations, is cause for optimism — and it underscores the power of the tools at our disposal, experts say.

“I never say we’re in the clear, because there’s still people for whom COVID is going to remain a really big concern, and they’re going to continue to need to do everything they can to avoid getting infected,” Los Angeles County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer said. “We still have a lot of virus in our communities, but we are definitely in a promising place.”

How did this happen?

Many residents probably enjoyed some degree of protection against the coronavirus because they have been vaccinated, previously infected or both. This means some were able to avoid being infected, while others’ immune systems were bet-

[See **COVID,** B5]

Adams Kellum to lead LAHSA
Homeless Services Authority names president and CEO of St. Joseph Center its executive director. **B3**

Amtrak revives weekend service
Suspended passenger service between Orange and San Diego counties could resume as soon as Feb. 4. **B3**

Southland hit by strong gusts
Residents are warned of hazardous driving conditions, outages and downed trees. **B4**

Pay restrooms for San Diego?
Officials are lobbying state to lift its ban on public pay toilets to aid the unhoused. **B5**

Lottery **B2**

SPORTS ON THE BACK: Lakers finally make a move, trade for Wizards’ Hachimura. **B10**

United in grief over the loss of 11 lives

[**Vigil,** from B1]
shadowed by the shooting. He felt it was better to gather together as a community.

"It's kind of like part of the coping process," he said.

Those gathered came to pay their respects to the 11 killed and nine wounded in Saturday night's shooting at a Monterey Park dance studio and to join the grieving in the attack's aftermath.

"There's something about being with others who feel just as sad as you do," said Enrique Hernandez, who had arrived on a bicycle. "You don't feel so alone."

He gripped the handlebars of his bike. "That man must have been so full of hate to walk inside a business and just shoot people like that."

Hernandez stared up at the U.S. and California flags hanging at half-staff. A heart-shaped wreath of white roses stood between them. There were red balloons, bouquets of flowers, candles — and 11 blue hearts, cut from wood, lettered with a verse from the Gospel of Matthew.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Nearby, a woman spoke to a reporter. "This was so out of the blue," she said. A man carried a hand-lettered sign that read: "The problem are guns."

The violence at Star Ballroom Dance Studio, perpetrated by 72-year-old Huu Can Tran, was one of the worst mass shootings to take place in Los Angeles County and the deadliest in the U.S. since a gunman stormed an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, almost eight months ago, killing 19 children and two teachers.

Bundled up against the cold as temperatures dropped into the 50s, the mourners of Monterey Park started to arrive at twilight. Their presence was reminiscent of other commemorations held in the wake of other tragedies, each reflecting the unique character and heartache of their communities.

Their numbers grew. Bringing pets and children, they were young and old, representing a mix of backgrounds wishing to pay their respect to this predominantly Asian American community in the San Gabriel Valley.

Like Hernandez, they were trying to make sense of the senselessness of the killing.

"You never expected people to pass away before their new year," said Johnson Chan, 66, of Monterey Park, who came to the vigil with his wife, Catherine.

Photographs by Allen J. Schaben Los Angeles Times

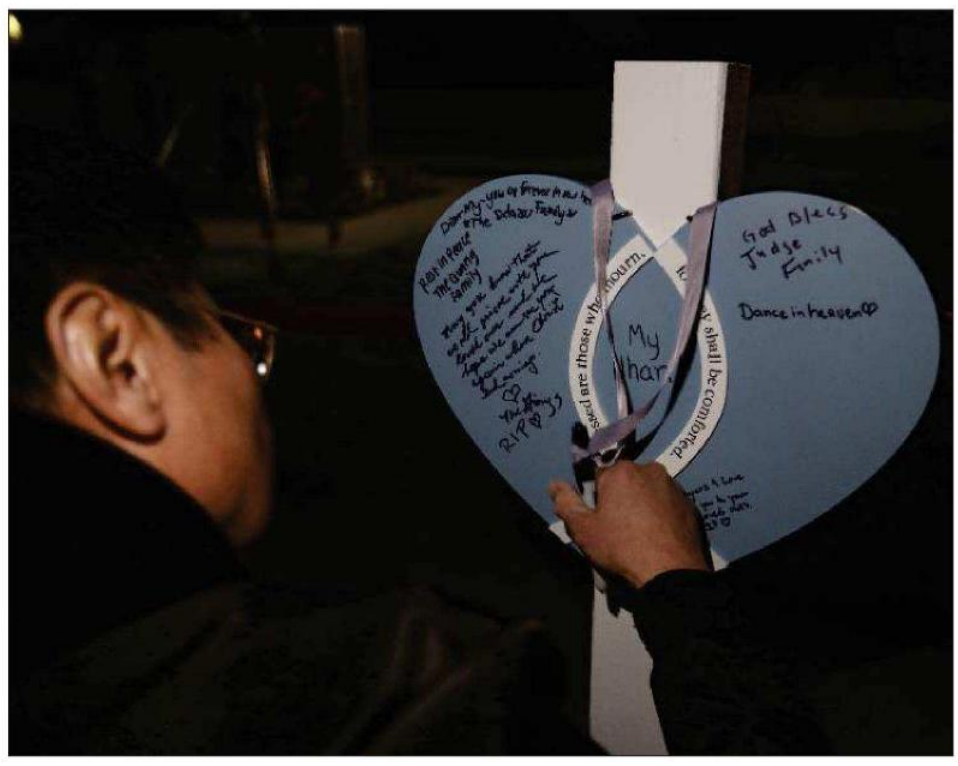
"THERE'S something about being with others who feel just as sad as you do," said Enrique Hernandez, one of more than 100 people who attended a Monday vigil for victims of the Monterey Park shooting. Above, bouquets for victims stand beneath flags flying at half-staff.

> 'I just want to show support for the community and to let them know they are not alone.'
>
> — Julie Zhu, a Monterey Park resident who attended the vigil

Julie Zhu of Monterey Park described the shooting as a tragedy for not only the Chinese diaspora but also the larger Asian community.

We are all "focused on this tragedy," said Zhu, who shared that she is of Japanese descent. Glancing around the crowd, she took solace in the turnout.

"I just want to show support for the community and to let them know they are not alone. ... We will protect each other, and we will also just pray for each other, and we hope this community will end this kind of tragedy and we can live in peace."



A MAN signs a heart with the name of My Nhan, manager of Star Ballroom Dance Studio, one of the victims of the mass shooting Saturday night.

Alan Kobayashi, 65, of Eagle Rock acknowledged that investigators may never fully understand the motive of the gunman, who died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in a strip mall parking lot in Torrance. The dance studio shooting, he said, "makes you shiver, but I am so happy to see so many people."

A little past 7 p.m., Rep. Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park) addressed the crowd. She reminded the community to support the victims' families and those in the hospital with serious injuries.

"Some are intubated," she said. "Some are worried about their medical bills, some are worried about whether they can get their job back, and we in the community have to really help them."

Affirming her faith in the city, she ended her comments on a note of strength.

"I know this community is resilient," she said. "I know that we can get through this if we work together, and we are stronger when we work together. I know that together we will make it through this crisis."

Later in the evening, news began to spread through the crowd of another massacre in Northern California, where at least seven people were killed in two related shootings in rural areas of Half Moon Bay.

Still sitting on his bike, Hernandez could only look down and shake his head.

"Too much bloodshed," he said.

Tran was oldest mass shooting suspect in recent history

[**Killer,** from B1]
and there have been several cases of "domestic spillage," or instances where personal attacks result in the deaths of other people, Densley said.

"There have been times, for instance, where people have targeted places of worship or workplaces specifically to try and get a family member, but then other people end up getting shot as sort of collateral damage," he said.

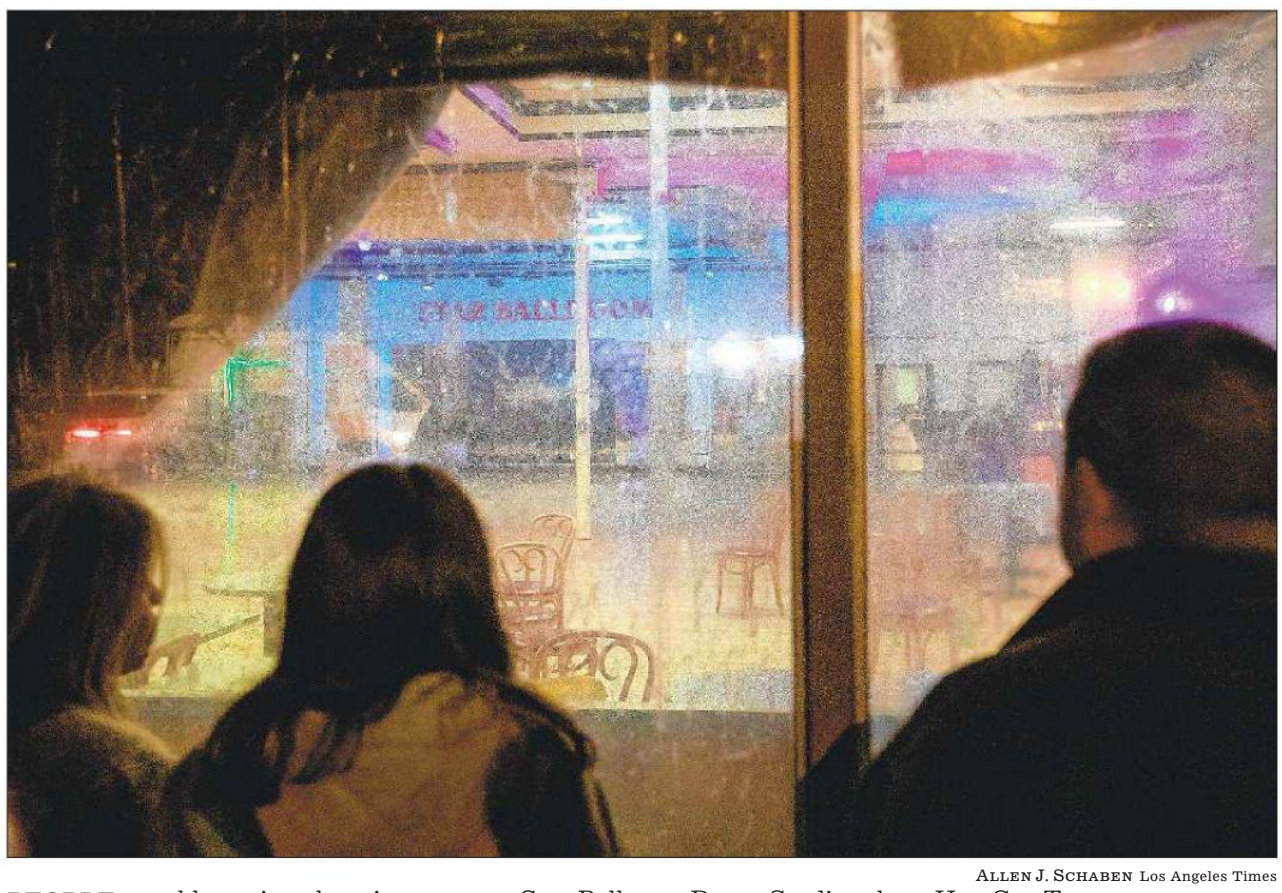
In most cases of crime, the elderly are the victims, not the perpetrators, said Jaclyn Schildkraut, interim executive director of the Regional Gun Violence Research Consortium, which also collects data dating to 1966 on mass shootings.

In Saturday's shooting, the perpetrator and most of the victims were older adults, with all 10 of the victims who died Saturday night in their 50s, 60s or 70s, according to the Los Angeles County coroner.

An 11th victim died Monday at LAC+USC Medical Center after succumbing to "extensive injuries," hospital officials said. That person's age was not immediately disclosed.

According to mass shooting data compiled by both organizations, the average age of attackers is 33, making Tran more than twice as old as the vast majority of mass shooters.

The Regional Gun Violence Research Consortium uses a different definition for a mass shooting, which includes multiple victims who have been injured or killed during a shooting at a public location. Yet even under that definition, Tran would be among the oldest of perpetrators.



Allen J. Schaben Los Angeles Times

PEOPLE are able to view the crime scene at Star Ballroom Dance Studio, where Huu Can Tran went on a rampage. At 72, he was the oldest mass shooter in recent history, according to the nonprofit Violence Project.

> 'I think what it really comes down to is, they have reached their final breaking point and they no longer care if they live or die.'
>
> — James Densley, president and co-founder of the Violence Project, on what possibly drove Huu Can Tran, 72, to become a mass shooter

Of 402 incidents studied by the group between 1966 and 2020, only six of the perpetrators were older than 70, Schildkraut said.

In 2009, an 88-year-old opened fire at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, killing one guard and injuring two others.

In 1981, a 70-year-old killed five people in a shooting in Allen, Ky.

Research on mass shootings can vary, largely because of how a mass shooting is defined. The Times defines a mass shooting as one with four or more people killed — not including the shooter — in a public location with firearms, as defined by the Congressional Research Service.

Even by the definition used by the Regional Gun Violence Research Consortium, an elderly shooter is extremely rare, Schildkraut said.

"As rare as mass shootings are, they actually follow a lot of what we know about crime in general," she said, and that includes the fact that "people tend to age out of crime," she said.

The tragedy in Monterey Park underscores the need for improved crisis and suicide prevention services, Densley said, noting that mass shootings are "always intended to be a final act" by the shooter — be it by suicide, death at the hands of law enforcement officers or eventual imprisonment.

"I think that is maybe the biggest takeaway here: What would be enough to drive a 72-year-old man to perpetrate a crime like this?" he said.

"I think what it really comes down to is, they have reached their final breaking point and they no longer care if they live or die."

Lottery results

Tonight's Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: $31 million
Sales close at 7:45 p.m.

For Monday, Jan. 23, 2023

Powerball
Powerball number is **bold**

12-31-47-58-60—**Powerball 23**
Jackpot: $502 million

Fantasy Five: 1-14-21-32-39

Daily Four: 2-2-9-2

Daily Three (midday): 8-1-6

Daily Three (evening): 3-1-8

Daily Derby:
(7) Eureka
(2) Lucky Star
(5) California Classic
Race time: 1:42.45

Results on the internet:
www.latimes.com/lottery
General information:
(800) 568-8379
(Results not available at this number)

JAE C. HONG Associated Press

A POLICE OFFICER stands outside the Lai Lai Ballroom & Studio in Alhambra on Sunday, a day after an attempted attack at the business by a man authorities say gunned down 11 people at a Monterey Park dance studio. The Lai Lai reopened for lessons on Monday.

Coming to terms with tragedy

In aftermath of Monterey Park shootings, area residents process emotions

BY CARLOS DE LOERA

A neon sign flashed "Open" at the Lai Lai Ballroom & Studio in Alhambra on Monday afternoon, less than two days after an attempted attack at the business by a man authorities say gunned down 11 people at a Monterey Park dance studio.

But the doors of the business remained locked to the public. The studio's parking lot was sparsely filled with employee vehicles and television news vans. Almost no evidence remained that a potentially violent event had occurred less than 48 hours earlier, except for a small patch of fence secured with yellow police tape.

DAMIAN DOVARGANES Associated Press

THE LAI LAI was closed Sunday after the killings in Monterey Park. In Alhambra, a resident and business owner said at first he didn't believe the news.

"In observance of the tragedy at Star Dance last night, Lai Lai ... will reopen Monday for lessons only," the studio posted Sunday on Facebook. "As an extra precaution, all students and teachers are subject to search prior to entering the studio. Our prayers go out to the victims families."

The night before, an armed man made his way into the Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park in a hail of gunfire. When he left a few minutes later, 10 people were dead and 10 others injured. (On Monday, another victim died of her injuries.)

The man, identified by Los Angeles County sheriff's officials as 72-year-old Huu Can Tran, then traveled to the Lai Lai, where he tried to force his way inside but was disarmed by a community member who was inside the studio.

Alhambra native Jonathan Ha, who owns Magik Milk, a boba tea shop located down the street from Lai Lai, was horrified by the violence.

"Any time [a shooting] happens — either around a holiday or not, doesn't really even matter — it's super unfortunate," the 33-year-old said. "But because it was around the holiday, specifically where people come together to celebrate and bring good luck and good fortune into the year, it's immensely unfortunate for it to have hit our community."

Like many others, Ha was celebrating the Lunar New Year with his family when he saw news reports of the events in Monterey Park and Alhambra. He recalled the shock and uncertainty his family felt when reading the initial reports.

"Everyone was like, 'Is this confirmed? Is it real? It's in the San Gabriel Valley — we don't get that type of news.' " Ha said. "We had to wait around and get more confirmed sources, and when that started coming through, reality started just sitting in. ... We really just don't know how" to process things like that," he added.

Ha opened the doors to his store Sunday morning to spread "positive energy" in the community. He wanted to keep his head up and provide a space where people could have a sense of normality and where he and his staff could lend an ear to anybody looking to talk.

"My family has always looked at it as we're not gonna let this or events like this actually terrorize us and keep us from living our lives," he said.

Saturday's shooting also weighs on Ha as he once had been heavily involved in the dance community. Before the pandemic, he worked as an international choreographer along the West Coast and in Asia and Europe. The global shutdown forced him out of that career, and that's when he transitioned to tea shop owner.

As a dancer, Ha had dropped in several times at the Lai Lai Ballroom & Studio and said he was a frequent visitor to Star Ballroom. After this weekend's events, he said he feels fortunate to have shifted to a different field.

"I think [he and his wife] kind of consider ourselves lucky that we were not as heavily involved in dance because that could happen to any studio looking at the the way it turned out," Ha said. "It's like a reality shock for us. Nobody's invincible, nobody's untouchable and no communities are completely safe from the yin and yang of the world."

Law enforcement sources told The Times that Tran, the shooting suspect, had frequented the two clubs — the Star Ballroom and the Lai Lai Ballroom — and that the shooting might have been sparked by a personal dispute.

They also believe Tran was having unspecified emotional problems that had been getting worse in the weeks before the shooting. Tran died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in a strip mall parking lot near Sepulveda and Hawthorne boulevards in Torrance after law enforcement officials closed in on him.

It will probably take weeks to unravel what happened. Detectives began serving search warrants at multiple locations Sunday.

Inside Tran's home in Hemet, investigators found a .308-caliber rifle, hundreds of rounds of ammunition, electronic devices, including cellphones and computers, and items that led officials to suspect he was manufacturing firearm suppressors, Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said during a news conference on Monday.

Authorities also seized a Norinco handgun that was registered to Tran from the van where his body was found Sunday, Luna said.

"I want to emphasize that all the firearms recovered still require additional forensic ballistic examinations and comparisons that we're doing with our partners, as well as additional investigations into the origins of where the suspect got those weapons," Luna said, adding there's "a lot of work to be done there, but we don't want to leave any stone unturned."

Times staff writers Noah Goldberg and Hannah Fry contributed to this report.

Amtrak to restore weekend coastal service

BY PHIL DIEHL

Amtrak passenger service between Orange and San Diego counties, which has been suspended since Sept. 30, could resume on weekends as soon as Feb. 4, a transportation official said Monday.

Passenger service has been on hold because of ongoing efforts to stabilize the site of a recurring landslide near San Clemente that was activated again by heavy rain last fall. A contractor hired by the Orange County Transportation Authority is installing 220 ground anchors drilled deep into bedrock to steady the slope.

"Construction progress to date has ceased any appreciable slope movement over the last few weeks," said Jim Beil, the agency's executive director of capital programs.

"As a result of that, we've recommended reestablishment of the weekend passenger service," Beil told the Orange County Transportation Authority board Monday. "We believe it's now safe for Metrolink and Amtrak Pacific Surfliner to resume the weekend service."

Metrolink trains ran as far south as Oceanside before the suspension. Currently, those trains go only as far south as the San Clemente Pier station, and OCTA officials have not said when service might resume to Oceanside.

Metrolink and Amtrak passengers were asked to check *pacificsurfliner.com/alerts* and *metrolinktrains.com* for updates on rail service and schedules.

"Even with the recent heavy rain and high tides, our approach to this project has proven effective in keeping the track from moving and we're pleased to announce that passenger service can safely resume on weekends," OCTA Chairman Gene Hernandez, the mayor of Yorba Linda, said in a news release Monday afternoon. "I want to thank the public for their patience and I hope everyone can understand that ensuring passenger safety guides all of our actions."

Weather permitting, the contractor will continue working 12-hour weekday shifts, officials said. Passenger service will remain suspended on weekdays to ensure the safety of construction crews. Freight service, which usually runs at night, has continued across the repair site, although at reduced speeds and frequency.

"The beach area is constrained and the work requires the operation and movement of large construction equipment with personnel on and around the tracks," said OCTA spokesman Eric Carpenter.

Diehl writes for the San Diego Union-Tribune.

L.A. Homeless Services Authority names chief executive

BY BENJAMIN ORESKES

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's new chief executive is no stranger to the often contentious efforts to remove tents from public spaces and get homeless people indoors. She has managed many of them.

Va Lecia Adams Kellum now takes on a bigger challenge: charting a path for the maligned joint-powers authority, whose mission and management have been under the microscope in recent years. Her appointment was approved by the agency's board of commissioners, comprising people appointed by elected officials from the city and county.

"Together we will transform LAHSA into an instrument of systemic change and a model for addressing homelessness on our streets. Each of us knows the time is now for action," Adams Kellum said at a news conference Monday, flanked by Mayor Karen Bass, Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, county Board of Supervisors Chair Janice Hahn and a host of other officials.

"As we all see the extraordinary amount of human suffering in our communities, we must not delay in doing the work," she added.

In discussing Adams Kellum's appointment, each official touted the theme of closer collaboration and a more convivial relationship between the city of L.A. and L.A. County. Each plays a role in the complex funding and coordination of resources and services devoted to combating homelessness.

LAHSA — born out of a lawsuit between the city and county — is funded by both and is beholden in various ways to elected officials from each. The lack of clarity about LAHSA's role has been a source of consternation in recent years, even as its annual budget has grown to close to $730 million.

Elected officials said LAHSA must move with urgency in addressing the crisis.

"LAHSA coordinates homelessness and the resources and all that, but we want to have it be a much more decisive role," Bass said. "One of the problems has been [articulating] who is the actual leader? Who is the actual decision maker? So, given this new spirit of cooperation that we have, I think you will see LAHSA's role be much more clearly defined in the next few months."

Adams Kellum has worked closely with Bass in the first weeks of her administration to help coordinate the clearing of encampments in Venice and Hollywood. St. Joseph Center, the Venice nonprofit she has run since 2008, did much of the outreach to find temporary hotel rooms for people staying in those encampments.

In the summer of 2021, St. Joseph Center received $5 million from the city to move people living in a large encampment on Ocean Front Walk in Venice. Residents and business owners felt the city had been slow to react to the proliferation of tents.

About half of the funds went to renting motel rooms for more than 200 people. Much of the rest went to staff to supervise the outreach and operations of the motels. Of the 213 people moved off Ocean Front Walk, 109 have found permanent housing.

Adams Kellum has said that it's much easier to get people paired with a housing subsidy and into permanent housing if they're indoors already.

That effort has served as a model for what Bass is trying to do — and Adams Kellum will initially be an advisor to the mayor, working in City Hall. She will take on her new role at some point in the spring, at an annual salary of $430,000, according to LAHSA documents. She replaces Stephen Simon, who directs the city's Department of Disability and had served in an interim capacity since Heidi Marston resigned last spring over a conflict with the board.

Adams Kellum's appointment was announced the day before the launch of LAHSA's 2023 "point in time" count, during which thousands of volunteers fan out across the county over three days, counting people living on the street and in tents, shelters and vehicles. The count will cover the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys Tuesday, the Westside and Eastside Wednesday and South Los Angeles, the Metro area and the Antelope Valley Thursday. Results are expected in late spring or early summer.

During the news conference, officials encouraged Angelenos to volunteer.

Much of Adams Kellum's early work will be about mollifying frustrations over the impact — or lack thereof — the agency has had in stemming the growth of homelessness. Much of that anger has been expressed by members of the Board of Supervisors, including Hahn.

"I've had my doubts about LAHSA," Hahn said. "What LAHSA has done, and, frankly, what our county and our city has done so far to address this crisis, I believe, hasn't worked."

Photographs by MEL MELCON Los Angeles Times

THE SANTA ANITA DAM, part of a huge network of dams, flood-control channels, underground storm drain channels and debris basins, is filled with about 600,000 cubic yards of muck more than 80 feet deep.

Five reservoirs pose risk to the towns below

[**Dams,** from B1]

underground storm drain channels, and dozens of debris basins and spreading grounds built over the last century to prevent flooding and to capture stormwater for groundwater recharge in local aquifers.

Just as the combined effects of atmospheric rivers and global warming have revealed themselves in drought, extreme wildfire behavior, and flooding across California, they are also putting the county's flood-control system to the test.

"We have to keep up with these environmental changes and challenges," said Mark Pestrella, director of the county Department of Public Works.

That won't be easy or cheap. The price tag for removing an estimated 15 million cubic yards of debris and mud from all five reservoirs and hauling it to sediment placement sites across the foothills is about $550 million, Pestrella said.

That money is expected to come from county funds, state and federal grants and, perhaps, an assessment agreed to by property owners, officials said.

"We don't have a never-ending pocket full of change," Pestrella said. "As it stands, property owners in the county are charged $28 annually for these kinds of improvements — and that hasn't changed since the 1980s."

The estimated volume of debris and mud targeted for removal from the other four facilities includes 3 million cubic yards from Big Tujunga Dam, which protects Tujunga; 2 million cubic yards from Cogswell Dam, which controls flooding in the West Fork of the San Gabriel River; 4.5 million cubic yards from Pacoima Dam, which protects Olive View-UCLA Medical Center, Sun Valley, and Sunland; and 5 million cubic yards from San Gabriel Dam, which controls outflow from San Gabriel Canyon's 200-square-mile watershed.

Water from San Gabriel Dam churns down the canyon to Morris Dam, a facility a few miles above Azusa that former President Hoover dedicated in honor of Los Angeles consulting engineer Sam Morris in 1934.

The significant loss of vegetation due to the Bobcat fire has heightened risk of flooding, debris flows and mudslides. Such events could prevent the dams from making controlled releases.

It took about four years to remove 330,000 cubic yards of sediment from behind Santa Anita Dam in the aftermath of the massive 2009 Station fire.

It may take three more years, Klippel said, to clean out the material that has accumulated behind the dam since the Bobcat fire roared through the heart of the watershed two years ago.

The Santa Anita Dam reservoir was "completely clean to increase storage capacity when the Bobcat fire hit," he said. "Just look at it now."

The Bobcat fire burned about 116,000 acres of forest between the San Gabriel and Antelope valleys and destroyed 160 homes and buildings. It was one of many wildfires that broke out in August and September — blazes that made 2020 the state's worst fire year on record. More than 4 million acres burned, and dozens of people were killed.

> 'It could flood, and we're busting our tails to make sure that doesn't happen.'
>
> — STERLING KLIPPEL, principal stormwater engineer at the L.A. County Department of Public Works

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted later that year to mobilize department resources to support communities devastated by the fires.

Since then, Supervisor Kathryn Barger has been monitoring the grant requests and proposed emergency actions still wending their way through complex permitting processes required to launch and complete repair and restoration projects.

"It is imperative that our crews complete this debris removal work to preserve the integrity, safety and capacity of our flood-control system," Barger said.

"The torrential rains we experienced recently can quickly pose a flood risk to our local communities and lives could be at stake," she added. "This is an immense task — so I will continue to track progress to ensure the job gets done."

IT TOOK about four years to remove sediment from behind Santa Anita Dam after the 2009 Station fire.

Strong winds tear through L.A. area

BY NOAH GOLDBERG

Gusty winds reaching nearly 100 mph tore through Los Angeles County early Monday, and strong gale-like conditions could continue through Tuesday, according to the National Weather Service.

The National Weather Service issued a high-wind warning through 9 a.m. for Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains and warned of hazardous driving conditions, possible power outages and downed trees as northern and northeastern winds pounded Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties late Sunday into Monday.

The strongest wind gusts affected Los Angeles County, where the Magic Mountain Truck Trail in Santa Clarita had 95-mph winds, according to National Weather Service data. In Santa Barbara, the foothills of Montecito also had gusts up to 95 mph.

A portion of Highway 192 in Santa Barbara was closed because of trees falling onto power lines during the windstorm, according to Caltrans.

The windy conditions also led the National Weather Service to announce a "windblown dust advisory," urging Angelenos as well as residents of Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties to keep windows and doors closed and to avoid going outside if possible because of "moderate to unhealthy or higher air quality levels."

The gusty northern winds could continue Tuesday and again Thursday, according to the National Weather Service.

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Los Angeles Times

LEGAL NOTICES 1300

Legal Notices

LEGAL NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the follow property: One black ZTE model Z222 cell phone, one blue Verizon Samsung model SM-B311V, one blue LG model LGMS450 cellular telephone, one blue LG model LGMS450 cellular telephone, one silver iPhone 6 model A1586 cellular telephone, one black LG model LGMS695 cellular telephone, and one Verizon LG model LG-VN350 cellular telephone. The property was at 15040 Vanoween St., Apt 203, Van Nuys, CA on September 14, 2016 and is available for return. Any person interested in claiming the property must file a claim with DEA Los Angeles Field Division within 30 days from first publication date. Drug Enforcement Administration, Los Angeles Field Division, 255 East Temple St., 17th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Attention Christopher Sinclair. Otherwise it will be abandoned & disposed of in accordance with 41 C.F.R 128-48

Published in the Los Angeles Times on: January 10, 17, 24/2023

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR A CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NO. 23CMCP00005

Petitioner or Attorney (name, state, bar, and address):
Charles L'Ray Brodnax
1258 E Diamondale Drive, Carson, CA 90746
TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:
Petitioner Charles L'Ray Brodnax filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
Present Name
Charles L'Ray Brodnax - In Pro Per

Name Change

Proposed Name
Charles L'Ray Beard
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING
DATE: 3-23-2023
TIME: 8:30 A.M.
DEPT: A
ROOM: 904
The address of the court is: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA County of Los Angeles Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles South Central District 200 West Compton Blvd
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county.
Dated: Jnaury 13, 2023
David W. Slayton
Clerk
Published in the Los Angeles Times 01/24/23, 01/31/23, 02/07/23, 02/14/23

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Legal Notices

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER *(Número del Caso)*:
22CHLC00173
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT *(AVISO AL DEMANDADO)*: HELENE C BRY
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF *(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE)*: WELLS FARGO BANK , N.A.
NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (*www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp*), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (*www.lawhelpcalifornia.org*), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (*www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp*), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE:** The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! *Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.*
Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.
Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.
The name and address of the court is *(El nombre y dirección de la corte es)*: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 9425 PENFIELD AVENUE, CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is *(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es)*: CLAUDIA GAVRILESCU, ESQ. (CA BAR NO.: REESE LAW GROUP, 3168 Lionshead Avenue, Carlsbad, CA 92010; 760/842-5850 (File No. 565485)
DATE *(Fecha)*: 01/04/2022
SHERRI R. CARTER EXECUTIVE OFFICE / CLERK OF COURT, Clerk *(Secretario)*, by L. LOPEZ, Deputy *(Adjunto)*
(SEAL)
1/24, 1/31, 2/7, 2/14/23
CNS-3662411#

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Legal Notices

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER (Numero del Caso):
37-2019-00039011-CL-PO-NC

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
Parady Security

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
Liberty Insurance Corporation as Subrogee of Staff Pro, Inc.

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can located these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la información a continuación.
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Hay otros requisites legales. Es recommendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remission a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisites para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin lines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin lines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos extentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is:
(El nombre y dirección de la corte es):
Superior Court of California
County of San Diego
325 South Melrose Drive
Vista, CA 92081

The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiffs attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la dirección y el número del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abodgado, es):
Omar H. Raja 318528
Law Offices of Yempuku, Wetters & McNamara
2180 Harvard Street, Suite 375
Sacramento, CA 95815
916-649-8333
603-334-7903

Date: 07/29/2019

Clerk of the Superior Court
Michael Clemens, Deputy Clerk

Published in the Los Angeles Times 1/24/2023, 1/31/2023, 2/7/2023, 2/14/2023

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JUMBLE
THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.
RNWOS
SPOIE
NTEHLG
GPOAAD
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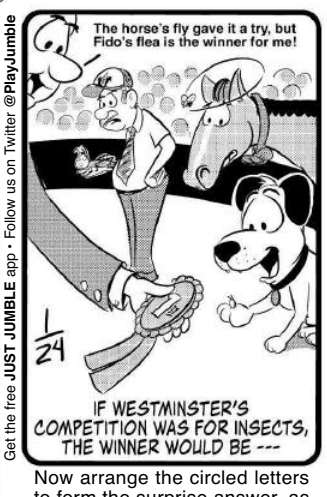
The horse's fly gave it a try, but Fido's flea is the winner for me!
1/24
IF WESTMINSTER'S COMPETITION WAS FOR INSECTS, THE WINNER WOULD BE ---
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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.
" " (Answers tomorrow)
Yesterday's Jumbles: SIGHT CLASH KARATE ENCORE
Answer: The psychiatrist dried her clothes on low heat because she didn't want to — SEE A SHRINK

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COVID figures improve, spurring cautious hope

[**COVID,** from B1]
ter primed to ward off severe illness.

Anti-COVID drugs — including Paxlovid and another oral medication known as molnupiravir — also probably helped by keeping higher-risk individuals from falling seriously ill.

Bivalent boosters, formulated specifically to help protect against the Omicron subvariants that have dominated in the last year, also became available in September.

Uptake has been too slow for some officials' liking, but almost 24% of eligible Californians have received the updated dose.

"Vaccinations, including bivalent boosters, can help protect you from getting seriously ill or even dying," said Dr. Wilma Wooten, San Diego County's public health officer.

Behavioral changes — including moving gatherings outside, testing before events, wearing a mask in indoor public settings and doubling down on other health hygiene efforts — also may have played a role.

"While nothing can be said with certainty, currently we're seeing evidence that our tools to fight COVID-19, including masks, the bivalent booster and therapeutics, are working," Ferrer said Thursday.

GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

PEOPLE WEAR masks while shopping Dec. 6 at Santee Alley in downtown Los Angeles. California has navigated what was, for many, the closest thing to a normal holiday season since 2019. Experts say it's a cause for optimism that underscores the power of tools at our disposal.

What do numbers show?

Case counts across California have dropped steadily since the first week of December, and so have coronavirus levels in wastewater.

In L.A. County, wastewater levels began declining in early December, although in recent weeks, they have plateaued at about 70% of last summer's peak — still a high level of concern, as defined by health officials.

"While wastewater concentration levels are not low, simultaneously, we're not seeing the post-holiday spike that was expected by the end of the first week in January," Ferrer said.

In San Diego County, Wooten said in a statement that "the virus is still circulating in the region. We're still seeing high percentages of positive COVID-19 tests and detecting high levels of the virus in wastewater."

Elsewhere, recent analysis "shows wastewater signals decreasing in the Greater Sacramento, San Joaquin Valley and Southern California regions, and plateauing in the Bay Area" and Northern California, the state Department of Public Health wrote in an update Thursday.

Other metrics also lend credence to the concept that coronavirus activity has slowed.

Modeling from the California Department of Public Health estimates that the spread of COVID-19 is probably decreasing statewide and has been trending downward or stable for the last month.

What about hospitals?

Though many infected with the coronavirus experience mild symptoms, or none at all, any pronounced uptick in transmission threatens to send a new wave of patients to hospitals. In 2020–21 and 2021–22, these deluges were massive and put immense pressure on healthcare systems across the state.

Although California did see a pronounced uptick in coronavirus-positive hospitalizations starting in late October and continuing through mid-December, that census has since plummeted.

On Thursday, 3,168 such patients were hospitalized statewide — a 29% drop in the last two weeks.

That figure includes those hospitalized with COVID-19-related illnesses and those who test positive incidentally after seeking care for some other reason.

Should there not be a significant resurgence of COVID-19 this winter, it will be the first time since the pandemic began in 2020 that a fall-and-winter wave was less severe than the preceding summer's, in terms of hospitalizations.

Continued improvements have prompted a parade of California counties to progress to the low COVID-19 community level, as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Placement in that category hinges on recent calculations of coronavirus case and hospitalization rates, as well as bed occupancy, and indicates that the burden on hospitals is relatively mild.

Fourteen California counties moved into the low COVID-19 community level Thursday: Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Sonoma, Tehama and Ventura.

With last week's update, 71% of Californians now live in counties with a low COVID-19 community level, up from 28% the prior week.

Deaths remain a concern

As of Jan. 10, California was reporting 355 COVID-19 deaths per week.

Although that has increased lately, it remains below the summer peak of 396 and far below last winter's peak, when 1,827 deaths were recorded for the week ending Feb. 27.

More than 98,000 Californians have died from COVID-19, a toll that exceeds the entire population of cities such as Santa Monica, Mission Viejo and Redding.

Nationally, COVID-19 is responsible for far more deaths than flu. The CDC has reported more than 44,000 COVID-19 deaths since the start of October, more than double the estimated 17,000 from flu.

What about XBB.1.5?

XBB.1.5 is among the latest alphanumerical members of the sprawling Omicron family. It's a descendant of XBB, which is a recombinant of descendants of the Omicron subvariant BA.2.

Much of the focus surrounding this particular subvariant has been its infectivity, as it may be the most transmissible version of the coronavirus.

XBB.1.5 now accounts for an estimated 49.1% of all new cases in the U.S., making it the most common edition of the coronavirus in circulation nationwide, according to the CDC.

Though its share has grown steadily, it remains far less common in the region that includes California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii and the Pacific island territories. An estimated 24.1% of coronavirus cases over the last week were thought to be XBB.1.5, CDC data show.

The ultimate effect of XBB.1.5 in terms of hospitalizations remains unclear. But current data suggest the new variant is not fueling a spike.

For instance, Ferrer said, Atlanta is in a region where about 31% of coronavirus specimens were estimated to be XBB.1.5. That's double what it is for the region that includes Chicago.

If XBB.1.5 were fueling a surge in hospitalizations, you'd expect the Atlanta area's hospitalization rate to be worse than the Chicago area's. Yet the latter's hospitalization rate — 11.1 new weekly coronavirus-positive hospitalizations for every 100,000 residents in Cook County — has been higher than Atlanta's Fulton County, which has a hospitalization rate of 8.8, Ferrer said.

She noted, however, that "there are a lot of underlying variables that are affecting hospitalization rates in different regions — including local policies, vaccination rates and even behaviors that change according to the weather, such as being inside more."

"While we need to continue to track the impact of increased circulation of XBB and XBB.1.5 on illness severity, the current information suggests that this strain of Omicron is not having a major impact on hospitalization rates as of this time," Ferrer said.

Pay toilets to help San Diego's unhoused?

BY DAVID GARRICK

SAN DIEGO — San Diego city leaders want the state to lift a nearly 50-year-old ban on pay toilets, which they say could solve a shortage of clean and safe downtown restrooms that repels tourists and puts homeless people's health at risk.

The city could afford to install and operate many more secure and well-lighted restrooms across downtown and in other pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods if it could cover some of its costs by charging each user a nominal fee, leaders say.

Some critics say it would be cruel and inhumane to charge homeless people for the right to use a restroom, but city officials say homeless people would be better off, because there would be so many more clean and safe public restrooms.

"This is not meant to be a barrier to access, but to actually increase the number of restrooms that we have out there," City Council President Sean Elo-Rivera said. "We've heard from multiple people in the community that they would gladly pay a quarter or 50 cents for access to a clean restroom."

Reactions to Elo-Rivera's proposal from local homeless advocates and downtown leaders have been mixed.

Many say they see the logic behind charging fees so that the city can afford to open more restrooms, but some expressed concern that people might urinate and defecate on the streets more often if restrooms cost money.

Elo-Rivera's proposal was unanimously endorsed last month by the City Council, which added overturning the state ban on pay toilets to the city's Sacramento lobbying priorities for 2023.

The state ban specifically prohibits cities from charging fees to help cover the costs of operating public restrooms, so the council voted to "support legislation that allows local jurisdictions to implement cost-recovery measures for public bathroom access."

California was part of a national movement in the 1970s that prompted more than a dozen states to ban pay toilets. That push was led by a group called the Committee to End Pay Toilets in America, which said access to free restrooms should be a basic human right.

The group also complained that pay toilets were sexist because at the time many of them charged for use of stalls while making use of urinals free.

"The initial efforts to ban any cost recovery were well-intended, but the result has been there are fewer and fewer and fewer public restrooms, and there are really big public health impacts as a result," Elo-Rivera said. "We're not providing the level of dignity that folks in our community deserve."

City officials stress that lifting the state ban wouldn't automatically prompt a wave of pay toilets across California. It would simply give cities, especially large cities struggling with homelessness, the discretion to experiment with pay toilets.

San Diego officials also stress that the city wouldn't be required to charge fees high enough to cover the entire cost of operating the restrooms.

They could charge small fees, and any revenue generated would help defray some of the city's costs and allow it to afford to operate more public restrooms. Homeless people could also possibly be given tokens to let them use the restrooms for free.

City officials say it now costs about $30,000 a month to operate portable toilets when security and lighting are included.

While costs vary for permanent toilets based on location, amenities and other factors, city officials say they typically cost about $250,000 to install and require maintenance and security costs similar to portable toilets.

"The costs associated with providing the level of access to restrooms that we might seek can really add up," Elo-Rivera said.

Mayor Todd Gloria said in 2021 that San Diego was committed to having a clean and safe public restroom within a quarter-mile — roughly a five-minute walk — of any location downtown.

But a study released last month by San Diego State University shows there aren't nearly enough restrooms to fulfill that pledge. There are only two 24-hour public restrooms downtown, with most of the area's 20 other public restrooms operating about 10 hours per day.

San Diego's lack of downtown restrooms has been highlighted by four county grand jury reports. It has also been blamed for the hepatitis A outbreak in 2017, which killed 20 and sickened 582 more, and a 2021 outbreak of Shigella that infected more than 45 people.

Bob McElroy, a homeless advocate who runs the nonprofit Alpha Project, agreed that the proposal simultaneously raised concerns and had some merit.

"I can see the logic behind it, and maybe it's a smart move," he said. "Generating revenue for more restrooms makes sense, but that's not going to fly with the homeless population."

McElroy said many homeless people have no money on them at all.

"If they have to go and they don't have 25 cents, they're just going to go where they normally do — not in a restroom," he said.

Mitchelle Woodson, executive director of the homeless advocacy group Think Dignity, strongly objected to the idea of pay toilets.

"This is ridiculous — I'm against any charge for a basic human need," said Woodson, whose group helped coordinate the recent SDSU restroom study. "I'd be against it whether it's 25 cents or $25."

Woodson said that the downtown restroom problem was caused by decades of city negligence and that the solution is not to start charging homeless people for restroom use.

She said the city should pay for an adequate number of clean and safe restrooms downtown and stop complaining about the costs.

Garrick writes for the San Diego Union-Tribune.

OBITUARY NOTICES

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Los Angeles Times

BARAK, Deborah

Mount Sinai Memorial Parks
Hollywood Hills 800-600-0076
www.mountsinaiparks.org

ISHIDA, Osami "Sam"

Osami "Sam" Ishida, 79, of Culver City, passed away on January 4, 2023 after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

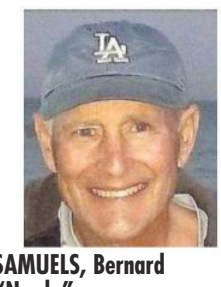
Sam was predeceased by his wife Peggy Ishida (2007), his sister Keiko (2009) and brother Kaz (2020).

He is survived by his son, Devin and daughter in law Lori; his daughter Carin; grandsons Mathieu and Lucas and his grand dogs, Forrest, Jenny, Hana, Monkey and Luna.

Born in Arkansas then settled in Los Angeles and Culver City, Sam was a passionate deep sea fisherman, hockey fan and race car enthusiast. He found traveling in his later years and enjoyed spending time with his family and friends.

A private family service was held on January 18, 2023.

www.FukuiMortuary.com
213-626-0441



SAMUELS, Bernard "Nardy"

July 28, 1947 - January 23, 2023

Beloved husband, father and grandfather Bernard "Nardy" Samuels passed away on January 23 at the too-young age of 75. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Wendy, daughter and son-in-law Shayna and Glenn Turner, son and daughter-in-law Bryan and Jessica Samuels, grandchildren Levi, Amelia, Bodhi and Phoebe, and brothers and sisters-in-law Zach and Elana Samuels and Sandy and Claudia Samuels.

Nardy was a high school teacher and administrator and always saw the full potential in each student. His love of football lead him to become a PAC-10 official, which he thoroughly enjoyed. He loved to golf, swim, ski, travel, celebrate Jewish traditions, crochet, and most of all, spend time with his family. He was known for his big heart, good looks and bad jokes. He will be greatly missed.

The funeral will be held at Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary. Donations can be made in his honor to the City of Hope, which supported Nardy throughout his long battle with multiple myeloma.

TERNSTROM, Tim C.

June 19, 1947 - September 28, 2022

Tim was born and raised in Los Angeles, where he continued to live. He loved art, music, surfing and researching topics from quantum physics to growing pomegranates. He was a complicated genius, a true autodidact and generous to a fault.

Tim passed away after battling several health issues. He is survived by his sister, Margo Ternstrom and brother-in-law, Art Watanabe and will be missed by many.

TREBOW, Beverly H

November 26, 1935 - January 21, 2023

Beverly Helen Trebow passed away at age 87. Born in Los Angeles to Bessie and Ben Shafer, Beverly graduated from Beverly Hills HS, and earned her Special Education Certificate. She worked devotedly with pre-school special education students in LAUSD. She was predeceased by her loving husband, Fred. Beverly is survived by her daughter, Dr. Elizabeth Trebow, sister, Dr. Arlene Price, 2 nieces and 4 nephews. Beverly was adored by all who knew her. She was involved in B'nai B'rith and many other charitable organizations. Funeral will be January 27, at Noon, at Hillside Memorial Park.

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Los Angeles Times
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THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

Sunny and dry: The storm that helped to produce the Santa Ana winds Monday has now moved away to the east, and we can expect less wind today with sunshine. There will be a few patches of frost in the morning in inland valley locations before it warms up quickly. Still breezy in the mountains. Wednesday will remain dry with sunshine. Santa Ana winds will pick up again Wednesday night.

5-day forecasts

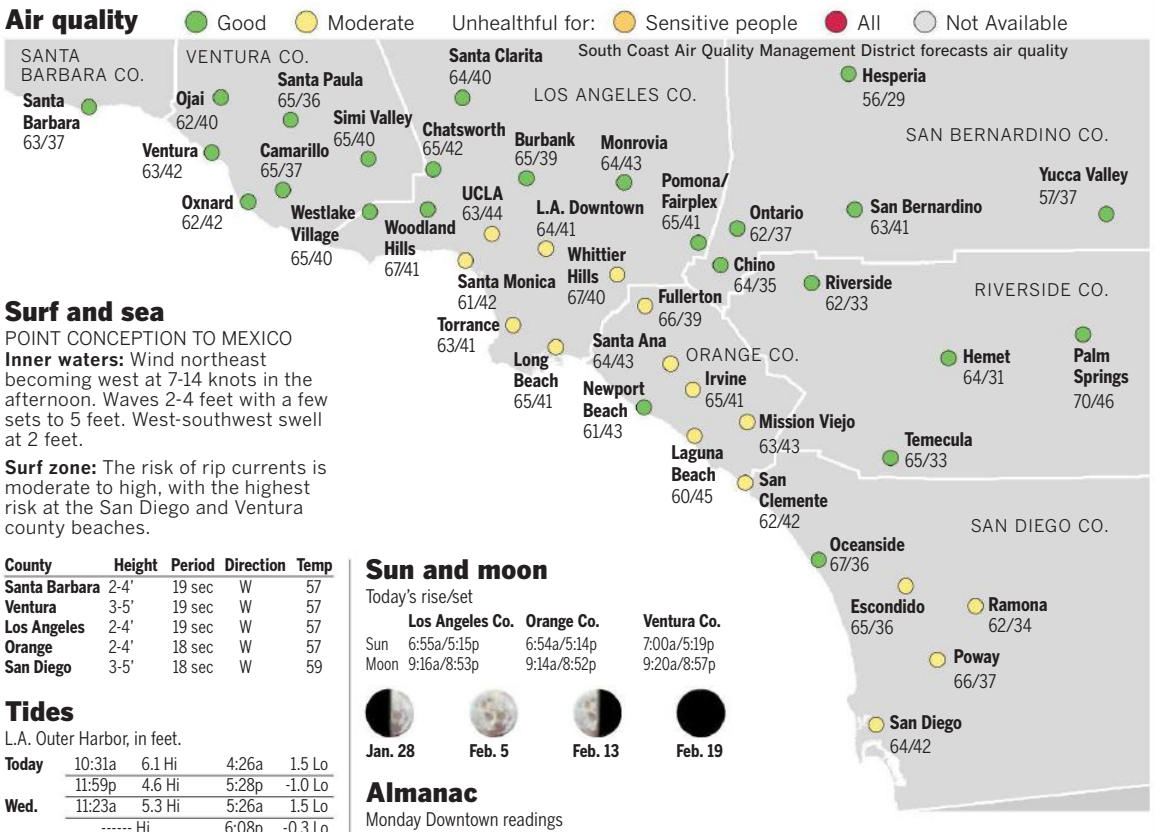
High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

	L.A. Basin		Valleys		Beaches		Mountains		Deserts	
Today	64|41		65|42		61|42		41|16		70|46	
	Lots of sun		Lots of sunshine		Lots of sunshine		Sunny; not as cold		Lots of sunshine	
Wednesday	Sunny	68/44	Sunny	65/46	Sunny	66/48	Sunny; chilly	41/19	Sunny	71/50
Thursday	Sunny	70/43	Sunny; windy	65/45	Sunny	67/42	Windy	34/18	Windy	68/48
Friday	Mostly sunny	66/43	Mostly sunny	66/42	Mostly sunny	63/41	Milder	50/21	Sunny	72/46
Saturday	Partly sunny	62/48	Partly sunny	61/45	Partly sunny	59/48	Mostly sunny	46/22	Sunny	69/48

Air quality

Good · Moderate · Unhealthful for: Sensitive people · All · Not Available

South Coast Air Quality Management District forecasts air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO

Inner waters: Wind northeast becoming west at 7-14 knots in the afternoon. Waves 2-4 feet with a few sets to 5 feet. West-southwest swell at 2 feet.

Surf zone: The risk of rip currents is moderate to high, with the highest risk at the San Diego and Ventura county beaches.

County	Height	Period	Direction	Temp
Santa Barbara	2-4'	19 sec	W	57
Ventura	3-5'	19 sec	W	57
Los Angeles	2-4'	19 sec	W	57
Orange	2-4'	18 sec	W	57
San Diego	3-5'	18 sec	W	59

Tides

L.A. Outer Harbor, in feet.

Today	10:31a	6.1 Hi	4:26a	1.5 Lo
	11:59p	4.6 Hi	5:28p	-1.0 Lo
Wed.	11:23a	5.3 Hi	5:26a	1.5 Lo
	------	Hi	6:08p	-0.3 Lo

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people

Las Vegas, 45 · Phoenix, 45
Los Angeles, 45 · San Francisco, 45

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set

	Los Angeles Co.	Orange Co.	Ventura Co.
Sun	6:55a/5:15p	6:54a/5:14p	7:00a/5:19p
Moon	9:16a/8:53p	9:14a/8:52p	9:20a/8:57p

Jan. 28 · Feb. 5 · Feb. 13 · Feb. 19

Almanac

Monday Downtown readings

Temperature	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura
High/low	67/46	66/43	60/47
Normal high/low	68/49	69/47	66/44
High/low a year ago	73/49	77/48	74/52
Record high/date	84/1968	79/2018	85/1963
Record low/date	33/1937	36/2002	32/2002

Precipitation	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura
24-hour total (as of 5 p.m.)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Season total (since Oct. 1)	13.01	10.94	13.33
Last season (Oct. 1 to date)	10.36	5.47	9.54
Season norm (Oct. 1 to date)	6.38	5.25	7.13
Humidity (high/low)	33/14	48/18	71/34

California cities

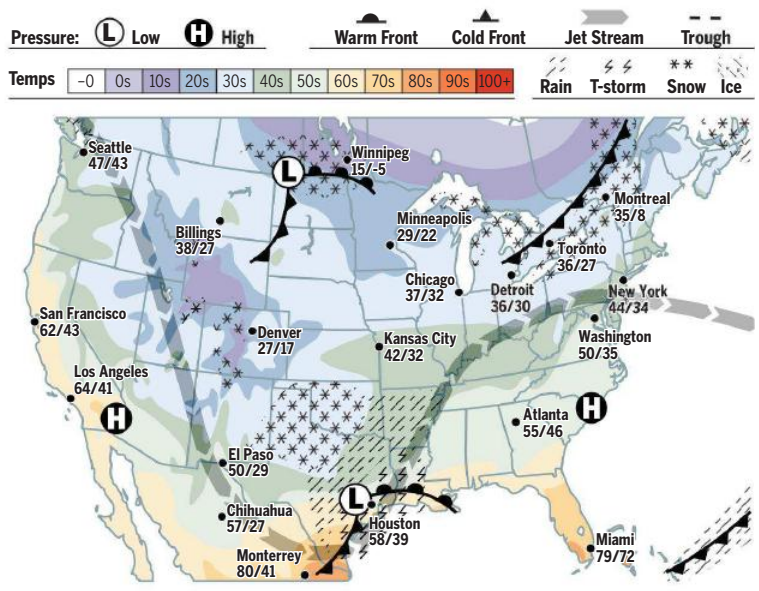
City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Wed. Hi	Lo
Anaheim	69	49	--	65	39	68	48
Avalon/Catalina	xx	xx	--	58	49	63	54
Bakersfield	53	44	--	57	37	59	37
Barstow	56	39	--	59	33	61	33
Big Bear Lake	29	19	--	41	16	41	19
Bishop	45	28	--	56	29	53	26
Burbank	65	48	--	65	39	67	45
Camarillo	62	39	--	65	37	66	46
Chatsworth	63	46	--	65	42	66	45
Chino	63	45	--	64	35	71	51
Compton	63	38	--	65	41	68	43
Dana Point	65	51	--	61	44	64	48
Death Valley	68	51	--	66	47	67	51
Del Mar	68	43	--	63	42	66	48
Escondido	64	40	--	65	36	68	40
Eureka	54	35	--	58	38	58	35
Fallbrook	62	46	--	66	37	70	43
Fresno	54	35	--	59	36	60	37
Fullerton	66	43	--	66	39	69	47
Hemet	58	44	--	64	31	69	34
Hesperia	52	27	--	56	29	59	34
Huntington Beach	66	47	--	62	42	64	51
Idyllwild	47	30	--	50	35	52	34
Irvine	66	51	--	65	41	69	50

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Wed. Hi	Lo
L.A. D'ntown/USC	67	46	--	64	41	68	44
L.A. Int'l. Airport	68	47	--	61	45	64	48
Laguna Beach	66	47	--	60	45	63	50
Lancaster	57	30	--	57	25	59	30
Long Beach	65	42	--	65	41	69	46
Mammoth Lakes	34	16	--	36	13	36	16
Mission Viejo	64	48	--	63	43	68	47
Monrovia	63	38	--	64	43	68	50
Monterey	61	38	--	61	41	63	41
Mt. Wilson	40	26	--	46	36	47	40
Needles	57	42	--	61	40	61	42
Newport Beach	65	52	--	61	43	65	51
Northridge	64	45	--	66	41	68	49
Oakland	63	41	--	62	39	62	45
Oceanside	66	39	--	67	36	70	42
Ojai	62	30	--	62	40	64	41
Ontario	61	44	--	62	37	69	50
Palm Springs	65	52	--	70	46	71	50
Pasadena	65	48	--	64	43	67	45
Paso Robles	56	30	--	62	29	62	30
Redding	63	47	--	69	48	69	48
Riverside	57	42	--	62	33	67	36
Sacramento	61	43	--	58	33	61	34
San Bernardino	59	45	--	63	41	67	46

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Wed. Hi	Lo
San Diego	65	42	--	64	42	65	48
San Francisco	63	53	--	62	43	63	46
San Gabriel	xx	xx	--	66	42	70	45
San Jose	61	46	--	62	38	63	38
San Luis Obispo	63	34	--	66	34	65	39
Santa Ana	67	52	--	64	43	66	52
Santa Barbara	60	39	--	63	37	62	42
Santa Clarita	60	41	--	64	40	66	43
Santa Monica Pier	69	46	--	61	42	66	48
Santa Paula	62	37	--	65	36	65	47
Santa Rosa	71	37	--	66	32	69	38
Simi Valley	63	45	--	65	40	68	46
Tahoe Valley	33	16	.01	41	17	40	20
Temecula	60	35	--	65	33	70	39
Thousand Oaks	62	45	--	65	40	65	46
Torrance	66	37	--	63	41	67	47
UCLA	xx	xx	--	63	44	65	48
Van Nuys	66	47	--	67	41	70	52
Ventura	60	47	--	63	42	66	51
Whittier Hills	66	41	--	67	40	73	47
Woodland Hills	64	44	--	67	41	66	47
Wrightwood	35	22	--	47	35	50	36
Yorba Linda	67	41	--	66	40	73	55
Yosemite Valley	48	25	--	46	30	47	29

Today in North America

Snow in the southern Plains: A major snowstorm will affect parts of the Texas panhandle and Oklahoma. The same storm is expected to produce severe thunderstorms capable of spawning tornadoes from southeastern Texas to Louisiana and Mississippi.



U.S. cities

MONDAY'S EXTREMES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES

High 88 in Miami, Fla. **Low** –20 in Farson, Wyo.

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Albany	34	32	.63	37	22	Cy
Albuquerque	35	33	--	40	21	Pc
Anchorage	30	21	.07	40	33	Cy
Aspen	35	4	--	23	6	Sf
Atlanta	48	39	.01	55	46	Pc
Austin	60	25	--	56	37	R
Baltimore	46	39	.24	50	32	Pc
Boise	32	16	--	35	22	Pc
Boston	36	33	1.10	42	28	Pc
Buffalo	33	30	.03	36	28	Sf
Burlington, Vt.	31	28	.16	37	17	Sn
Charleston, S.C.	61	50	.29	59	46	Su
Charlotte	53	41	.24	55	41	Su
Chicago	30	21	Tr	37	32	Cy
Cincinnati	34	31	.02	44	33	Pc
Cleveland	33	31	.06	35	31	Cy
Columbia, S.C.	55	45	.08	58	38	Su
Columbus	34	30	.01	38	29	Cy
Dallas/Ft.Worth	55	33	--	42	33	R
Denver	30	15	.01	27	17	Pc
Detroit	34	29	Tr	36	30	Cy
El Paso	63	40	--	50	29	Su
Eugene	43	30	--	49	32	Pc
Fort Myers	74	69	1.16	80	66	Pc
Hartford	36	33	1.06	42	24	Pc
Honolulu	83	67	--	81	66	Sh
Houston	59	36	--	58	39	Ts
Indianapolis	33	30	Tr	41	33	Pc
Jacksonville, Fla.	64	52	.35	67	55	Pc
Kansas City	44	24	--	42	32	Cy
Knoxville	44	37	.17	51	37	Pc
Las Vegas	54	39	--	56	37	Su
Louisville	41	35	Tr	49	37	Pc
Medford	45	28	--	52	30	Pc
Memphis	49	36	.03	51	38	Sh
Miami	88	70	--	79	72	Cy
Milwaukee	34	20	Tr	38	29	Pc
Minneapolis	30	11	Tr	29	22	Cy
Nashville	50	38	--	51	40	Pc
New Orleans	57	45	--	67	51	Ts
New York	39	37	.75	44	34	Pc
Norfolk	52	42	.36	51	35	Su
Oklahoma City	49	22	--	36	30	R
Omaha	34	14	Tr	37	23	Cy
Orlando	69	62	.01	75	61	Cy
Philadelphia	42	38	.47	46	32	Pc
Phoenix	50	38	--	57	37	Su
Pittsburgh	32	31	.09	37	28	Cy
Portland, Ore.	49	38	--	48	40	Cy
Providence	36	33	1.22	43	27	Pc
Raleigh/Durham	55	42	.22	56	36	Su
Reno	37	21	--	43	24	Su
Richmond	54	40	.25	53	32	Su
St. Louis	48	34	--	45	33	Cy
Salt Lake City	35	20	Tr	34	24	Pc

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Seattle	46	35	--	47	43	Cy
Tampa	69	62	--	76	65	Cy
Tucson	47	38	Tr	55	31	Su
Tulsa	49	21	--	39	29	R
Washington, D.C.	47	39	.16	50	35	Pc
Wichita	46	18	--	38	27	Sn

World

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Acapulco	85	68	--	86	68	Su
Amsterdam	41	35	.16	37	29	Cy
Athens	63	50	.16	62	51	Pc
Bangkok	93	72	--	91	68	Cy
Barcelona	50	32	--	47	38	R
Berlin	36	33	--	36	28	Cy
Cabo San Lucas	81	47	--	72	49	Pc
Cairo	71	54	--	72	52	Su
Dubai	83	63	.02	79	63	Pc
Dublin	54	46	Tr	51	46	Cy
Havana	88	66	--	87	64	Su
Ho Chi Minh City	93	77	--	92	72	Sh
Hong Kong	75	62	--	62	48	W
Istanbul	53	49	--	48	42	Cy
Jerusalem	62	47	--	64	45	Su
Johannesburg	85	57	--	86	62	Su
Kuala Lumpur	88	74	1.04	84	73	Ts
Lima	77	68	--	77	68	Pc
London	41	19	.12	43	29	Pc
Madrid	48	30	--	45	25	Su
Mecca	89	66	--	85	65	Su
Mexico City	76	44	--	79	44	Pc
Montreal	32	28	.12	35	8	Sn
Moscow	27	24	.06	34	24	Cy
Mumbai	81	66	--	81	66	Hz
New Delhi	75	50	--	69	56	Pc
Paris	37	34	--	39	33	Cy
Prague	32	27	.02	35	31	Cy
Rome	48	36	.31	53	35	Cy
Seoul	39	25	--	16	-2	Su
Singapore	83	78	.89	85	75	R
Taipei City	64	60	.23	53	45	Sh
Tokyo	45	40	.20	53	27	Sh
Vancouver	43	39	.11	45	38	R
Vienna	37	32	.04	38	32	Cy

Key: **Su** sunny; **Pc** partly cloudy; **Cy** cloudy; **Fg** foggy; **Prcp** precipitation; **Dr** drizzle; **Hz** hazy **Sh** showers; **Ts** thunderstorms; **R** rain; **Sn** snow; **Sf** snow flurries; **I** ice; **Rs** rain/snow; **W** windy; **Tr** trace. **Notes:** National extremes exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Missing data indicated by "xx". Monday's readings as of 5 p.m.

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TOP 25 COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Iowa women deal Ohio State first loss

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Caitlin Clark scored a game-high 28 points and Monika Czinano added 22 as No. 10 Iowa defeated No. 2 Ohio State 83-72, giving the Buckeyes their first loss of the season.

Iowa's 12-point lead almost midway through the third quarter narrowed to three with 9:05 left in the fourth. Ohio State's Cotie McMahon scored five of her 21 points in the final frame, but Czinano went three for three in the fourth quarter to help keep the Buckeyes at bay.

The Hawkeyes (16-4, 8-1 Big Ten) kept Ohio State scoreless for more than 2½ minutes in the fourth quarter, allowing Czinano and Iowa to command a 13-point advantage with 3:11 left.

Ohio State (19-1, 8-1) gave it one more try and went four for nine from the field in the final three minutes, but the Hawkeyes made all eight attempts at the free-throw line in that span to seal the win.

No. 4 Louisiana State 89, at Alabama 51: Jasmine Carson scored 20 points and Angel Reese had 14 points and 14 rebounds for her school-record 20th consecutive double-double to lead LSU. The Tigers (20-0, 8-0 Southeastern Conference) extended the program's longest winning streak to 20 games. The Crimson Tide (15-5, 4-3) had a three-game winning streak stopped.

No. 6 Indiana 92, at No. 13 Michigan 83: Mackenzie Holmes had 25 points and 10 rebounds in leading Indiana to its sixth straight win. Leigha Brown scored 31 points to lead Michigan, whose three-game winning streak ended.

Men

at No. 17 Baylor 75, No. 9 Kansas 69: LJ Cryer had 22 points with five three-pointers and Baylor stretched its Big 12-best winning streak to five games with win over Kansas in a matchup of the last two national champions. The reigning champion Jayhawks (16-4, 5-3 Big 12), coming off a 23-point home loss to Texas Christian, lost their third straight game. It's only their fourth three-game losing streak in coach Bill Self's 20 seasons.

at Nevada 97, No. 25 New Mexico 94, 2OT: Will Baker scored a career-high 28 points and made two free throws with 14 seconds remaining in the second overtime to help Nevada knock off New Mexico (18-3, 5-3 Mountain West Conference). Baker sank 12 of 17 shots with a three-pointer for the Wolf Pack (16-5, 6-2).

Polls

Purdue is back at No. 1 in the men's Associated Press top 25, followed by Alabama, Houston, Tennessee and Kansas State. Gonzaga is out of the top 10.

For the first time in the 47-year history of the AP women's poll, no team from Texas is in the top 25. That ends an 835-week run dating to the first poll in 1976. South Carolina remained a unanimous No. 1.

AP men's top 25

School	W-L			W-L
1. Purdue	19-1	13. Xavier		16-4
2. Alabama	17-2	14. Gonzaga		17-4
3. Houston	18-2	15. Auburn		16-3
4. Tennessee	16-3	16. Marquette		16-5
5. Kansas State	17-2	17. Baylor		14-5
6. Arizona	17-3	18. Charleston		21-1
7. Virginia	15-3	19. Connecticut		16-5
8. UCLA	17-3	20. Miami		15-4
9. Kansas	16-3	21. Fla. Atlantic		19-1
10. Texas	16-3	22. Saint Mary's		18-4
11. Tex. Christian	15-4	23. Providence		15-5
12. Iowa State	14-4	24. Clemson		16-4
		25. New Mexico		18-2

MEN'S TOP 25 RESULTS

No. 17 Baylor 75, No. 9 Kansas 69
Nevada 97, No. 25 New Mexico 94 (2OT)

WOMEN'S TOP 25 RESULTS

No. 10 Iowa 83, No. 2 Ohio State 72
No. 4 Louisiana State 89, Alabama 51
No. 5 Connecticut 94, DePaul 51
No. 6 Indiana 92, at No. 13 Michigan 83

ASHLEY LANDIS Associated Press

RUI HACHIMURA, guarded by LeBron James last season, is averaging 13 points per game on 48.8% shooting.

Hachimura should benefit Lakers

[**Lakers,** from B10]

tion problems in Washington have kept him from taking any large developmental steps.

He's averaging 13 points per game this season and 4.3 rebounds, making 48.8% from the field and 33.7% from three-point range. Hachimura also is coming off a game in which he equaled his career high with 30 points in a 138-118 win over Orlando last Saturday.

He's a restricted free agent at the end of the season, giving the Lakers a head start on evaluating him as a role player alongside LeBron James and, soon, Anthony Davis.

Nunn, who missed all of his first season with the Lakers because of a knee injury, had begun to play better over the last month, but with Lonnie Walker IV and Austin Reaves set to return from injuries and rookie Max Christie's emergence, the Lakers were overrun with guards.

The Lakers valued Hachimura's size and hope he can address some of the team's rebounding woes, though he's been somewhat inconsistent on the glass.

Hachimura's youth and potential, though, allowed the Lakers' front office to successfully thread the needle they've been focused on — improving the team in the trade market this year while also adding a piece that could matter for them in the long run.

He should help the Lakers' second unit, though he was a starter the first two seasons of his NBA career.

The trade comes at a time when the Lakers have made a strong on-court argument that the team is worthy of investment.

Davis is on track to return this week, and without him, the Lakers just beat the Memphis Grizzlies and Portland Trail Blazers, coming back from one of the worst quarters in NBA history to steal a win on Sunday in Portland.

The newest Laker

Rui Hachimura's numbers with Washington:

Season	Reb.	Ast.	Pts
2019-20	6.1	1.8	13.5
2020-21	5.5	1.4	13.8
2021-22	3.8	1.1	11.3
2022-23	4.3	1.2	13.0

And James, despite being in Year 20, just won his second player of the week honors in the last three weeks.

Between now and the Feb. 9 trade deadline, the Lakers play eight games — six against teams that currently would be in the postseason plus one against the plenty dangerous Oklahoma City Thunder. The Lakers host San Antonio on Wednesday on the second night of a back-to-back set in the easiest game of the stretch.

After starting the season 2-10, the Lakers have gone 20-15, giving them hope.

"The NBA's a long season," guard Patrick Beverley said Sunday. "It's always predicated on the most conditioned team[s] coming into training camp always start well. They even off, and the vets kind of catch their legs 20 to 25 games in. They win some games. It's so competitive in this league, you can win any game. You can beat good teams. You can lose to anybody any night. I believe our early tests, our early injuries has prepared us for a lot going into the postseason, going into the down stretch of the season.

"Any adversity you're fortunate with. For me and my teammates, you appreciate adversity. It helps you get through the tough times."

The Lakers are hoping a big, young forward with potential can help them through tough times too.

It might not be the big move — but the Lakers feel like they got better on Monday.

NBA

George growing into new point guard role

[**Clippers,** from B10]
point guard so you don't have to facilitate and try to make the play, like, you got to go get yours, as well,' " Lue said. "And he's been doing a good job of just trying to make the right play, the right pass, but you've got to be aggressive. He's doing a good job of just understanding what we want to run and how we want to run it."

Two victories do not make a trend. But the Clippers (25-24) hope they can start one. Entering Monday, their offense ranked 26th in producing 111.7 points per 100 possessions, according to Cleaning The Glass, the statistics database that strips out "garbage time" possessions. Against San Antonio and Dallas, the Clippers averaged 133.9 points per 100 possessions.

Those numbers just as easily could be pinned to Leonard scoring a combined 66 points in his last two games, and reserve Norman Powell a total of 45. But George also has played a key role.

Nine of his 12 assists Friday came after he reached the paint, or was near it on a drive. After only four first-half shots Sunday, stymied by Dallas' zone, George responded by repeatedly finding ways into the paint. This is the way George has to play, Lue said.

"It just gives you another attack guy; he creates plays for us, gets downhill and I don't have to do it all game," Leonard told The Times. "I can get some catch-and-shoots now and when I got the ball bringing it up it's the same thing, we're just helping each other out.

"Mann is doing a hell of a job, he's still running it. I just think Paul being who he is as a ballhandler and three-point shooter, mid-range shooter, it helps us."

With the role change, George "has to sacrifice the most" because he won't get some of the shots that were typical when he played off the ball, Lue said Sunday. But the change was made in part because George still has the option to attack first, keeping him engaged, the coach said.

ASHLEY LANDIS Associated Press

PAUL GEORGE, shown giving Terance Mann a high-five, is not being asked to be a traditional point guard. "He's been doing a good job of just trying to make the right play," Clippers coach Tyronn Lue said.

With Leonard scoring 30 points Sunday to extend his streak of at least 24 points to seven consecutive games, the offense will tilt ever more heavily toward Leonard, but Lue did not want that to come at the cost of his co-star's rhythm.

It addressed a valid concern, George said.

"I felt like I would lose my rhythm just because, rightfully so, we got one of the best players and one of the best playmakers and when [Leonard] has the ball in his hands, good stuff happens, so we're going to run stuff through him," George told The Times. "Perfectly fine with that.

"Flip side of that, sometimes it is tough when you haven't shot it in two, three, four, five possessions and then now you get one and it's like all right, I'm tuned up. But then I might not shoot again for another two, three, four possessions and so you might find it's like OK, my shot, I need to put a little more touch on it, but then you don't shoot it again. It's a little tough to stay in rhythm sometimes.

"Yeah, this works great for me where ... while I'm out there, I'm trying to get him opportunities and look for him and make the game easy for him because he's so efficient and shoots the ball so well."

Entrusting the new responsibilities to George means accepting the risk of turnovers. George had turned the ball over on 18% of his possessions as the pick-and-roll ballhandler entering Saturday. On 25 pick-and-roll possessions in which he'd been trapped, his turnover rate had jumped to one-third, per Synergy Sports.

Operating at his most efficient means making the simple pass, Lue has stressed.

George scored 16 points with 12 assists and zero turnovers against San Antonio. He added 21 points and four assists and five turnovers against the Mavericks, though none of the turnovers came after halftime as the Clippers outscored Dallas by 19 to cruise to a 14-point win.

Not everyone in the NBA is convinced the team will play without a traditional point guard for long. The Clippers are said to be interested in upgrading at the position ahead of the Feb. 9 trade deadline, and Lue has said in recent weeks he would prefer to keep a point guard in his rotation.

Within the locker room, players' opinions on the topic differ. Several believe a "traditional" point guard is needed to optimize the offense.

Others say it's an outdated notion so long as ballhandlers are unselfishly moving the ball from one side of the court to another, forcing rotations that can open driving lanes.

"If we go toward this way to finish the season I'll love it," George said, "but, you know, I think just with how we play and if we're going to play with four wings and a big or at times five out with our small ball, then I think that's where I feel we have the advantage where we can stay big and we still got a facilitator and playmaker on the floor and can get us into sets and get us into good shots."

On Saturday, Lue indicated he feels the same way. The wing-oriented lineups he tried against the Mavericks built around George, Leonard and Powell could be a "really, really good unit for us."

"Marcus [Morris], Nico [Batum], PG, Kawhi or [Robert Covington] in that mix along with Norm or Luke [Kennard], whatever, those are going to be some good lineups for us," Lue said.

STANDINGS

Standings have been arranged to reflect how the teams will be determined for the playoffs. Teams are ranked 1-15 by record. Division standing no longer has any bearing on the rankings. The top six teams in each conference qualify for the playoffs. Teams seven through 10 will participate in a play-in tournament with the top-seeded team playing the lowest qualifying play-in team. The next-lowest qualifying team would play the second, etc. Head-to-head competition is the first of several tiebreakers, followed by conference record. (Western Conference divisions:S-Southwest; P-Pacific; N-Northwest; Eastern Conference divisions: A-Atlantic; C-Central; S-Southeast).

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	PCT	GB	L10	Rk.
1. Denver	33	14	.702		9-1	N1
2. Memphis	31	16	.660	2	7-3	S1
3. Sacramento	27	19	.587	5½	7-3	P1
4. New Orleans	26	21	.553	7	3-7	S2
5. Dallas	25	23	.521	8½	3-7	S3
6. CLIPPERS	25	24	.510	9	4-6	P2
7. Phoenix	24	24	.500	9½	4-6	P3
7. Utah	25	25	.500	9½	6-4	N2
9. Minnesota	24	25	.490	10	6-4	N3
10. Golden State	23	24	.489	10	4-6	P4
10. Oklahoma City	23	24	.489	10	7-3	N4
12. LAKERS	22	25	.468	11	6-4	P5
12. Portland	22	25	.468	11	3-7	N5
14. San Antonio	14	33	.298	19	2-8	S4
15. Houston	11	36	.234	22	1-9	S5

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	PCT	GB	L10	Rk.
1. Boston	35	13	.729		9-1	A1
2. Philadelphia	30	16	.652	4	8-2	A2
3. Milwaukee	30	17	.638	4½	6-4	C1
4. Brooklyn	29	17	.630	5	5-5	A3
5. Cleveland	29	19	.604	6	5-5	C2
6. Miami	26	22	.542	9	6-4	S1
7. New York	25	23	.521	10	5-5	A4
8. Atlanta	24	24	.500	11	6-4	S2
9. Indiana	23	25	.479	12	2-8	C3
10. Chicago	22	24	.478	12	6-4	C4
11. Toronto	21	27	.438	14	5-5	A5
12. Washington	20	26	.435	14	5-5	S3
13. Orlando	18	29	.383	16½	5-5	S4
14. Charlotte	13	35	.271	22	3-7	S5
15. Detroit	12	37	.245	23½	2-8	C5

MONDAY'S RESULTS

Milwaukee 150, Detroit 130	Orlando 113, Boston 98
Chicago 111, Atlanta 100	Houston 119, Minnesota 114
Utah 120, Charlotte 102	Portland 147, San Antonio 127
Sacramento 133, Memphis 100	

TODAY'S GAMES

Favorite	Line	Underdog	Time
CLIPPERS	4	at LAKERS	7 p.m.
at Indiana	OFF	Chicago	4 p.m.
at Miami	OFF	Boston	4:30 p.m.
at New York	OFF	Cleveland	4:30 p.m.
at New Orleans	OFF	Denver	5 p.m.
at Dallas	7	Washington	5:30 p.m.
at Phoenix	OFF	Charlotte	6 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

Through Sunday's games

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Embiid, PHI	34	382	340	1142	33.6
Doncic, DAL	43	484	353	1444	33.6
Tatum, BOS	44	447	331	1371	31.2
Antetokounmpo, MIL	35	382	296	1085	31.0
Gilgeous-Alexander, OKC	43	441	395	1320	30.7
James, LAKERS	37	426	178	1102	29.8
Durant, BKN	39	410	267	1158	29.7
Lillard, POR	34	298	258	987	29.0
Mitchell, CLE	40	390	206	1135	28.4

Milwaukee 150, Detroit 130

MILWAUKEE

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
G.Anttkunmpo	26	8-15	11-17	1-12	4	1	29
Connaughton	25	2-3	0-0	1-2	1	1	6
Lopez	24	8-12	3-4	1-4	1	1	21
Allen	23	3-6	2-2	1-3	5	1	9
Holiday	29	7-12	1-1	0-4	7	3	16
Portis	23	8-12	0-0	3-10	3	2	18
Ingles	18	2-4	0-0	1-3	3	2	6
Carter	15	6-8	0-0	0-3	3	4	18
Middleton	15	3-7	0-0	2-2	4	3	8
Nwora	13	2-6	0-0	2-4	4	3	4
Beauchamp	7	3-6	0-0	0-0	1	1	7
Matthews	6	2-2	0-0	0-0	1	2	6
Green	5	0-3	0-0	0-1	0	1	0
T.Anttokounmpo	4	1-2	0-0	1-2	1	2	2
Totals		**55-98**	**17-24**	**13-50**	**38**	**27**	**150**

Shooting: Field goals, 56.1%; free throws, 70.8%

Three-point goals: 23-52 (Carter 6-8, Matthews 2-2, Connaughton 2-3, Portis 2-3, G.Antetokounmpo 2-4, Ingles 2-4, Middleton 2-4, Lopez 2-6, Beauchamp 1-2, Allen 1-4, Holiday 1-5, Green 0-3, Nwora 0-4). Team Rebounds: 7. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 6 (Lopez 2, Allen, Carter, Ingles, Nwora). Turnovers: 18 (Middleton 6, G.Antetokounmpo 4, Carter 2, Green 2, Allen, Beauchamp, Matthews, Nwora). Steals: 11 (Allen 3, Carter 3, Holiday 2, Ingles 2, Portis). Technical Fouls: Bucks, 9:36 fourth

DETROIT

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Bey	28	6-14	7-9	1-3	2	3	21
Bogdanovic	27	11-15	5-5	0-3	0	2	33
Duren	31	9-13	5-5	4-15	1	2	23
Ivey	29	4-10	3-6	2-4	11	3	12
Livers	21	2-5	3-3	0-1	1	2	9
Diallo	20	4-7	3-5	1-3	1	1	11
Knox II	19	2-4	0-0	2-5	0	2	5
McGruder	18	2-4	0-0	0-1	2	0	4
Burks	18	1-7	2-3	0-1	1	3	4
Joseph	18	2-7	0-0	1-3	7	1	5
Noel	6	0-1	3-4	0-2	0	2	3
Totals		**43-87**	**31-40**	**11-41**	**26**	**21**	**130**

Shooting: Field goals, 49.4%; free throws, 77.5%

Three-point goals: 13-32 (Bogdanovic 6-7, Livers 2-4, Bey 2-6, Knox II 1-2, Ivey 1-4, Joseph 1-4, McGruder 0-2, Burks 0-3). Team Rebounds: 5. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 3 (Duren 2, Joseph). Turnovers: 20 (Ivey 4, Burks 3, Diallo 3, Bogdanovic 2, Joseph 2, Knox II 2, Noel 2, Bey, Duren). Steals: 10 (Duren 2, Ivey 2, Bey, Bogdanovic, Burks, Diallo, Knox II, Livers). Technical Fouls: None.

Milwaukee	**49**	**34**	**32**	**35—150**
Detroit	**24**	**31**	**37**	**38—130**

A–18,011. T–2:13.

Houston 119, Minnesota 114

MINNESOTA

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Anderson	12	1-3	0-0	0-0	1	5	2
McDaniels	34	4-11	1-2	1-4	1	6	10
Gobert	35	5-8	5-7	6-16	1	3	15
Edwards	37	9-20	7-9	1-3	5	3	31
Russell	42	11-23	2-2	1-3	7	1	30
Rivers	26	4-8	1-2	1-6	3	2	10
Nowell	18	3-8	0-0	0-3	0	1	7
Knight	16	2-5	0-0	1-4	1	0	4
Reid	9	1-2	0-0	1-1	0	0	2
Ryan	6	1-3	0-0	0-1	0	1	3
Totals		**41-91**	**16-22**	**12-41**	**19**	**22**	**114**

Shooting: Field goals, 45.1%; free throws, 72.7%

Three-point goals: 16-42 (Edwards 6-10, Russell 6-12, Nowell 1-3, Ryan 1-3, Rivers 1-4, McDaniels 1-6, Anderson 0-1, Reid 0-1, Knight 0-2). Team Rebounds: 5. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 7 (Gobert 4, Edwards, Knight, Reid). Turnovers: 19 (Edwards 6, Russell 4, Nowell 3, Gobert 2, McDaniels 2, Anderson, Reid). Steals: 8 (Edwards 4, Russell 2, Nowell, Reid). Technical Fouls: Anderson, 5:18 first

HOUSTON

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Eason	26	5-8	1-2	3-9	3	3	11
Martin Jr.	32	2-5	2-2	0-7	2	2	6
Sengun	34	8-12	4-8	1-7	7	3	21
Gordon	30	5-13	2-2	1-4	4	1	14
Green	35	15-25	6-10	2-4	4	0	42
Mathews	28	4-10	0-0	1-3	0	1	10
Tate	22	3-6	5-6	1-7	1	3	11
Washington Jr.	12	0-3	0-0	0-1	1	0	0
Fernando	11	2-4	0-0	2-4	2	1	4
Christopher	3	0-2	0-0	1-1	0	0	0
Garuba	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Totals		**44-88**	**20-30**	**12-47**	**24**	**15**	**119**

Shooting: Field goals, 50.0%; free throws, 66.7%

Three-point goals: 11-30 (Green 6-12, Gordon 2-5, Mathews 2-8, Sengun 1-2, Martin Jr. 0-1, Tate 0-1, Washington Jr. 0-1). Team Rebounds: 17. Team Turnovers: 3. Blocked Shots: 5 (Eason 2, Fernando, Gordon, Green). Turnovers: 20 (Sengun 5, Tate 4, Fernando 3, Eason 2, Gordon 2, Green, Martin Jr., Mathews, Washington Jr.). Steals: 11 (Eason 3, Martin Jr. 3, Fernando, Gordon, Green, Tate, Washington Jr.). Technical Fouls: None.

Minnesota	**26**	**30**	**25**	**33—114**
Houston	**31**	**25**	**34**	**29—119**

A–13,811. T–2:23.

CHARLES REX ARBOGAST Associated Press

BALL HAWKS

DeMar DeRozan of the Bulls reacts as his pass is blocked by the Hawks' Bogdan Bogdanovic as Jalen Johnson also defends in Chicago's 111-100 win.

Sacramento 133, Memphis 100

MEMPHIS

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Brooks	30	6-15	0-0	0-1	6	1	13
Jackson Jr.	28	7-18	2-2	2-5	2	4	19
Tillman	29	5-6	0-0	1-6	2	2	10
Bane	28	9-13	0-0	1-4	5	1	21
Jones	31	5-13	0-0	2-6	8	0	12
Roddy	17	0-4	0-0	0-1	1	3	0
Williams	16	3-10	2-3	1-2	2	2	9
Aldama	14	2-5	2-3	0-0	2	1	8
Clarke	12	3-5	0-0	1-2	0	4	6
Konchar	9	0-4	0-0	1-1	0	1	0
Chandler	5	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
LaRavia	5	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0	0
Lofton Jr.	5	0-2	2-2	0-0	0	1	2
Williams Jr.	4	0-2	0-0	1-2	0	1	0
Totals		**40-98**	**8-10**	**10-31**	**28**	**21**	**100**

Shooting: Field goals, 40.8%; free throws, 80.0%

Three-point goals: 12-36 (Bane 3-4, Jackson Jr. 3-6, Aldama 2-5, Jones 2-5, Brooks 1-5, Williams 1-6, Chandler 0-1, Lofton Jr. 0-1, Williams Jr. 0-1, Roddy 0-2).Turnovers: 15. Steals: 14 (Jones 2, Konchar 2, Roddy 2, Tillman 2, Bane, Brooks, Clarke, Jackson Jr., LaRavia, Williams). Technical Fouls: None.

SACRAMENTO

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Barnes	30	6-10	2-2	0-2	2	1	20
Murray	33	7-11	1-1	1-9	0	0	20
Sabonis	30	7-13	0-0	2-10	11	3	14
Fox	32	7-14	2-2	1-5	10	1	17
Huerter	20	2-7	0-0	0-2	2	0	5
Lyles	25	8-11	2-2	0-7	0	1	24
Monk	23	5-9	1-1	2-9	8	0	13
Holmes	14	2-4	1-1	2-4	0	3	5
Mitchell	11	2-4	1-1	1-1	1	1	6
Davis	3	2-4	2-2	0-0	1	0	6
Dellavedova	3	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	0	0
Dozier	3	1-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	2
Len	3	0-0	0-0	1-2	1	1	0
Okpala	3	0-0	1-2	0-0	0	0	1
Totals		**49-88**	**13-14**	**10-53**	**37**	**11**	**133**

Shooting: Field goals, 55.7%; free throws, 92.9%

Three-point goals: 22-40 (Lyles 6-8, Barnes 6-9, Murray 5-7, Monk 2-5, Mitchell 1-2, Fox 1-3, Huerter 1-3, Sabonis 0-1, Davis 0-2). Blocked Shots: 5 (Lyles 3, Holmes, Murray). Turnovers: 24. Steals: 10 (Fox 4, Dozier 2, Lyles 2, Barnes, Okpala). Technical Fouls: None.

Memphis	**33**	**28**	**29**	**10—100**
Sacramento	**47**	**19**	**34**	**33—133**

Utah 120, Charlotte 102

CHARLOTTE

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
McDaniels	28	4-9	1-2	1-9	3	4	9
Washington	26	1-7	1-2	0-3	1	5	3
Plumlee	26	5-6	8-11	4-8	5	0	18
Hayward	23	4-7	3-4	0-2	1	1	11
Rozier	35	9-23	3-5	1-5	2	3	23
Smith Jr.	28	6-11	3-4	0-3	9	3	15
McGowens	27	0-7	2-2	1-4	1	3	2
Williams	17	5-7	1-2	3-3	0	3	11
Thor	17	0-3	2-2	1-4	0	1	2
Jones	4	2-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	4
Richards	4	2-3	0-0	0-0	0	0	4
Totals		**38-85**	**24-34**	**11-42**	**22**	**23**	**102**

Shooting: Field goals, 44.7%; free throws, 70.6%

Three-point goals: 2-16 (Rozier 2-8, Smith Jr. 0-1, Thor 0-1, McDaniels 0-2, McGowens 0-2, Washington 0-2). Team Rebounds: 12. Blocked Shots: 7 (Williams 3, Richards 2, McDaniels, Plumlee). Turnovers: 14. Steals: 8 (Williams 2, Hayward, McDaniels, Richards, Rozier, Thor, Washington).

UTAH

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Beasley	19	3-6	0-0	0-2	2	1	9
Markkanen	32	8-14	5-6	0-11	2	3	25
Kessler	22	5-6	3-4	4-9	0	5	13
Clarkson	28	8-16	0-0	0-0	2	2	18
Conley	27	5-12	0-0	0-3	3	2	14
Horton-Tucker	22	3-6	1-3	0-2	6	1	7
Vanderbilt	21	0-3	4-4	1-6	4	2	4
Sexton	20	3-8	5-5	2-2	3	2	11
Agbaji	20	3-7	0-0	0-4	2	3	8
Gay	9	1-3	2-2	1-5	0	2	4
Alxander-Walker	4	1-1	2-2	0-0	1	0	4
Azubuike	4	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	2	0
Fontecchio	4	1-1	0-0	1-2	0	1	3
Bolmaro	2	0-2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**41-86**	**22-26**	**9-46**	**25**	**26**	**120**

Shooting: Field goals, 47.7%; free throws, 84.6%

Three-point goals: 16-40 (Conley 4-8, Markkanen 4-8, Beasley 3-6, Agbaji 2-5, Clarkson 2-7, Fontecchio 1-1, Bolmaro 0-1, Gay 0-1, Horton-Tucker 0-1, Sexton 0-1, Vanderbilt 0-1). Team Rebounds: 6. locked Shots: 4 (Alexander-Walker, Azubuike, Conley, Markkanen). Turnovers: 16 (Clarkson 3, Beasley 2, Fontecchio 2, Kessler 2, Markkanen 2, Sexton 2, Agbaji, Azubuike, Gay). Steals: 8 (Beasley 2, Vanderbilt 2, Agbaji, Conley, Horton-Tucker, Markkanen).

Charlotte	**24**	**21**	**34**	**23—102**
Utah	**21**	**37**	**31**	**31—120**

A–18,206. T–2:15.

Orlando 113, Boston 98

BOSTON

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Horford	30	2-8	0-0	1-4	3	4	6
Tatum	37	9-19	4-6	0-6	7	2	26
Griffin	11	1-2	0-0	1-3	0	0	3
Brown	36	10-22	1-2	2-5	3	1	26
White	26	4-8	1-1	0-4	4	2	11
Pritchard	30	2-6	0-0	0-3	4	2	5
Williams	24	1-3	2-2	0-4	2	5	4
Hauser	18	5-9	0-0	0-2	1	3	13
Kornet	14	2-6	0-0	4-5	0	2	4
Kabengele	5	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	2	0
Davison	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Jackson	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**36-83**	**8-11**	**8-37**	**24**	**23**	**98**

Shooting: Field goals, 43.4%; free throws, 72.7%

Three-point goals: 18-46 (Brown 5-11, Tatum 4-10, Hauser 3-6, White 2-4, Horford 2-7, Griffin 1-2, Pritchard 1-4, Kornet 0-2). Team Rebounds: 8. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 4 (White 2, Hauser, Williams). Turnovers: 18 (Brown 5, Tatum 3, White 3, Williams 3, Horford, Kabengele, Kornet, Pritchard). Steals: 5 (Brown, Griffin, Horford, Tatum, White). Technical Fouls: None.

ORLANDO

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Banchero	35	7-13	6-9	0-5	2	0	23
F.Wagner	33	7-13	0-0	2-7	6	1	15
Carter Jr.	32	8-13	2-2	2-11	1	3	21
Fultz	31	3-9	2-2	1-4	5	0	8
G.Harris	24	2-5	0-0	1-1	1	0	5
Anthony	23	8-12	2-3	1-5	4	1	18
Bol	17	1-4	3-4	0-2	0	1	5
Suggs	16	1-3	1-2	0-0	2	2	3
M.Wagner	15	2-5	0-0	0-2	0	4	5
Isaac	9	4-7	0-2	1-3	1	0	10
Totals		**43-84**	**16-24**	**8-40**	**22**	**12**	**113**

Shooting: Field goals, 51.2%; free throws, 66.7%

Three-point goals: 11-27 (Carter Jr. 3-4, Banchero 3-5, Isaac 2-3, M.Wagner 1-2, G.Harris 1-4, F.Wagner 1-5, Anthony 0-1, Bol 0-1, Suggs 0-2). Team Rebounds: 14. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 3 (Anthony, Bol, Fultz). Turnovers: 10 (Carter Jr. 2, Fultz 2, M.Wagner 2, Anthony, Banchero, Bol, F.Wagner). Steals: 10 (Anthony 2, G.Harris 2, Isaac 2, Carter Jr., F.Wagner, M.Wagner, Suggs). Technical Fouls: Wagner, 1:10 third.

Boston	**23**	**31**	**25**	**19— 98**
Orlando	**30**	**25**	**33**	**25—113**

A–19,196. T–2:02.

Portland 147, San Antonio 127

SAN ANTONIO

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Kel.Johnson	30	4-12	0-0	1-4	1	1	20
Sochan	27	5-11	6-8	4-6	4	0	18
Poeltl	15	6-8	2-2	4-7	2	5	14
Jones	24	5-11	2-2	0-2	7	0	12
Langford	24	5-6	1-1	1-4	2	4	12
Branham	22	4-9	0-0	0-0	4	1	9
Collins	21	4-8	2-2	0-3	3	2	11
Richardson	19	3-7	3-3	1-3	2	1	11
S.Johnson	16	0-2	0-0	1-3	4	1	0
McDermott	16	5-7	0-0	0-1	0	1	13
Bates-Diop	7	0-2	2-2	0-0	1	2	2
Dieng	6	1-2	0-0	2-4	0	0	2
Roby	6	1-2	1-4	0-3	0	0	3
Totals		**47-90**	**20-26**	**14-40**	**30**	**18**	**127**

Shooting: Field goals, 52.2%; free throws, 76.9%

Three-point goals: 13-27 (McDermott 3-3, Kel.Johnson 3-7, Sochan 2-2, Richardson 2-4, Collins 1-1, Langford 1-1, Branham 1-4, Bates-Diop 0-1, Dieng 0-1, S.Johnson 0-1, Jones 0-2). Team Rebounds: 8. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 4 (Jones, Kel.Johnson, S.Johnson, Sochan). Turnovers: 15 (Collins 3, S.Johnson 3, Dieng 2, Kel.Johnson 2, Jones, Langford, McDermott, Poeltl, Sochan). Steals: 7 (Jones 2, Bates-Diop, Branham, Kel.Johnson, McDermott, Poeltl). Technical Fouls: Johnson, 1:06 third.

PORTLAND

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Grant	27	1-9	0-0	1-2	2	0	3
Hart	26	4-5	1-1	0-5	4	3	9
Nurkic	26	10-14	3-5	2-11	7	3	25
Lillard	30	12-19	6-6	0-1	12	2	37
Simons	27	9-15	4-4	0-1	1	1	26
Sharpe	27	8-12	0-0	0-3	0	2	19
Payton II	18	1-2	0-0	3-5	3	0	2
Little	17	4-6	0-0	1-2	3	0	10
Eubanks	15	3-4	1-2	1-4	1	1	7
Brown III	5	0-2	0-0	0-0	0	2	0
Keo.Johnson	5	1-2	0-0	0-0	1	1	3
Walker	5	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0	0
Watford	5	2-2	2-4	0-1	0	0	6
Butler Jr.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Totals		**55-92**	**17-22**	**8-36**	**34**	**16**	**147**

Shooting: Field goals, 59.8%; free throws, 77.3%

Three-point goals: 20-33 (Lillard 7-11, Simons 4-7, Sharpe 3-4, Little 2-2, Nurkic 2-4, Keo.Johnson 1-1, Grant 1-3, Hart 0-1). Team Rebounds: 7. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 4 (Eubanks, Grant, Little, Watford). Turnovers: 10 (Lillard 3, Nurkic 3, Brown III, Grant, Payton II, Sharpe). Steals: 11 (Nurkic 3, Payton II 3, Hart, Keo.Johnson, Lillard, Sharpe, Simons). Technical Fouls: Hart, 1:22 second.

San Antonio	**38**	**36**	**27**	**26—127**
Portland	**40**	**34**	**45**	**28—147**

Chicago 111, Atlanta 100

ATLANTA

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Bogdanovic	32	4-12	0-0	1-1	4	3	11
Collins	35	5-11	0-0	3-9	0	3	11
Capela	36	7-12	2-3	3-12	1	2	16
Murray	36	9-19	0-0	0-7	4	1	20
Young	37	7-16	7-10	1-3	13	1	21
Griffin	30	4-7	0-0	0-3	2	0	11
Johnson	15	1-4	1-4	1-6	0	3	3
A.Holiday	11	1-2	2-2	0-1	0	1	5
Kaminsky	4	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	2
Totals		**39-85**	**12-19**	**9-43**	**24**	**14**	**100**

Shooting: Field goals, 45.9%; free throws, 63.2%

Three-point goals: 10-33 (Griffin 3-5, Bogdanovic 3-8, Murray 2-7, A.Holiday 1-1, Collins 1-4, Capela 0-1, Johnson 0-1, Kaminsky 0-1, Young 0-5). Team Rebounds: 11. Team Turnovers: 1. Bl

THE DAY IN SPORTS

Galaxy transfer winger Grandsir

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The Galaxy pulled the plug on another member of their vaunted French Connection on Monday, transferring winger **Samuel Grandsir** to Le Havre of the French second division.

In 2021, **Greg Vanney's** first season as coach, the Galaxy acquired four players from French clubs. Only defender **Séga Coulibaly** remains. Midfielder **Rayan Raveloson** was transferred in August to French club Auxerre for a reported $1.78 million, winger — and designated player — **Kévin Cabral** was traded to the Colorado Rapids last month for $1 million in general allocation money, and now Grandsir, who has been looking for a way to return to France for most of the winter, is going to Le Havre.

Terms of the transfer were not announced, but the Galaxy will retain a sell-off percentage of any transfer fee should Grandsir be sold to another club.

"We want to thank Sam for his contributions to the club and we wish him and his family all the best as they return back to France," Vanney said in a statement.

Grandsir, 26, had seven goals and 13 assists in 73 games (49 starts) across all competitions in two seasons with the Galaxy. Before coming to MLS, Grandsir recorded 12 goals and 11 assists in 131 total appearances.

The departure of Cabral and Grandsir clears more than $1.8 million in salary, a designated player spot and two foreign roster spots for the Galaxy, but it also leaves them paper thin at winger just a month before the start of the MLS season.

— Kevin Baxter

The 59-year-old Payton is drawing plenty of interest from teams with coaching openings, including the Broncos. It's unclear what type of draft-pick compensation it would take to lure Payton from division rival New Orleans.

Longtime slugger **Nelson Cruz** and the San Diego Padres finalized a $1-million, one-year contract. The sides agreed to the deal Jan. 11, pending a physical. ... The Minnesota Twins acquired veteran **Michael A. Taylor** from the Kansas City Royals, adding depth and defense to their outfield in exchange for two relief pitching prospects: 23-year-old right-hander **Steven Cruz** and 25-year-old left-hander **Evan Sisk**.

Scott Rolen could become just the 18th third baseman elected to baseball's Hall of Fame, the fewest of any position. A seven-time All-Star who retired after the 2012 season, Rolen is one of the top contenders among 28 players in this year's Baseball Writers' Assn. of America vote that will be announced Tuesday night. The three leading contenders in this year's vote are first baseman **Todd Helton** at 79.6%, Rolen at 79% and reliever **Billy Wagner** at 73.5%, according to **Ryan Thibodaux's** Hall of Fame Ballot Tracker, an unofficial online account that keeps a tally of the writers' votes.

Ottawa Senators general manager **Pierre Dorion** said forward **Josh Norris** will undergo shoulder surgery and miss the rest of the season. Norris returned to the lineup Wednesday after missing 38 games with a shoulder injury. He had one goal and two assists in eight games this season.

Rodarius "Rara" Thomas, a wide receiver who recently transferred to national champion Georgia from Mississippi State, was arrested on a felony charge of false imprisonment and a misdemeanor count of family violence battery, according to Clarke County jail records.

Orlando Magic forward **Jonathan Isaac** played his first game since missing 2½ years with injuries, scoring 10 points in a 113-98 win over Boston.

The second year of Saudi-funded LIV Golf will be going to three courses owned by former **President Trump** as part of a 14-event schedule in 2023, according to SI.com.

ETC.

Panthers, Payton discuss coach job

The Carolina Panthers interviewed former New Orleans Saints coach **Sean Payton** for their coaching vacancy. Panthers owner **David Tepper** also has interviewed Philadelphia Eagles offensive coordinator **Shane Steichen**, Buffalo Bills offensive coordinator **Ken Dorsey**, New York Giants offensive coordinator **Mike Kafka**, former Indianapolis Colts coach **Frank Reich**, Denver Broncos defensive coordinator **Ejiro Evero**, former Detroit Lions and Colts coach **Jim Caldwell**, and **Steve Wilks**, who was the team's interim coach.

NFL PLAYOFFS

Times Pacific

SUNDAY'S CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

NFC: No. 2 San Francisco at No. 1 Philadelphia ..... Noon (Ch. 11)
AFC: No. 3 Cincinnati at No. 1 Kansas City ..... 3:30 (Ch. 2)

SUPER BOWL LVII: Feb. 12

at State Farm Stadium, Glendale, Ariz.
AFC winner vs. NFC winner ..... 3:30 p.m. (Ch. 11)

NHL STANDINGS

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	29	17	2	60	156	139
Seattle	27	14	5	59	166	144
KINGS	26	17	6	58	159	167
Edmonton	27	18	3	57	178	157
Calgary	23	16	9	55	154	146
Vancouver	18	25	3	39	155	186
San Jose	14	25	9	37	145	184
DUCKS	13	29	5	31	113	199
Central	**W**	**L**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Dallas	28	13	8	64	169	127
Winnipeg	31	16	1	63	160	126
Minnesota	25	16	4	54	143	130
Colorado	25	17	3	53	141	124
Nashville	22	18	6	50	129	136
St. Louis	23	21	3	49	149	167
Arizona	15	27	5	35	123	170
Chicago	14	27	4	32	108	163

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Metropolitan	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	29	9	8	66	151	124
New Jersey	30	12	4	64	161	121
N.Y. Rangers	26	14	7	59	151	125
Washington	25	18	6	56	156	139
Pittsburgh	23	15	8	54	148	138
N.Y. Islanders	23	21	5	51	143	141
Philadelphia	20	21	7	47	133	155
Columbus	14	30	3	31	122	184
Atlantic	**W**	**L**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Boston	37	5	4	78	177	96
Toronto	29	11	8	66	163	127
Tampa Bay	29	15	1	59	163	135
Buffalo	24	19	3	51	175	157
Florida	23	21	5	51	165	169
Detroit	19	18	8	46	138	153
Ottawa	20	23	3	43	133	152
Montreal	20	24	3	43	125	171

Note: Overtime or shootout losses are worth one point.

RESULTS

AT N.Y. RANGERS 6 FLORIDA 2	Mika Zibanejad scored twice, and Igor Shesterkin had 33 stops and just missed scoring an empty-net goal.
AT TORONTO 5 N.Y. ISLANDERS 2	William Nylander had four points in the second period before Auston Matthews' 25th goal sealed Toronto's win.
BUFFALO 3 AT DALLAS 2 (OT)	Rookie Owen Power scored his first goal of the season in overtime after Jason Robertson's 32nd goal tied it.
AT CALGARY 4 COLUMBUS 3 (OT)	Dillon Dube converted in overtime to spoil the Calgary return of Johnny Gaudreau, who missed a penalty shot.

TODAY'S GAMES

DUCKS at Arizona, 6 p.m.
Boston at Montreal, 4 p.m.
Minnesota at Tampa Bay, 4 p.m.
Vegas at New Jersey, 4:30 p.m.
Winnipeg at Nashville, 5 p.m.
Chicago at Vancouver, 7 p.m.
KINGS at Philadelphia, 4 p.m.
Florida at Pittsburgh, 4 p.m.
San Jose at Detroit, 4 p.m.
Buffalo at St. Louis, 5 p.m.
Washington at Colorado, 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY'S GAMES

N.Y. Islanders at Ottawa, 4 p.m.
Carolina at Dallas, 5:30 p.m.
Vancouver at Seattle, 7 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Toronto, 4 p.m.
Columbus at Edmonton, 6:30 p.m.

Ng Han Guan Associated Press

NOVAK DJOKOVIC looked back in form after dealing with a left hamstring issue and said he believes he can "go all the way" after he easily beat Alex de Minaur for a quarterfinals berth, his 13th time reaching that stage.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Rybakina sails to semifinals

ASSOCIATED PRESS

$54-MILLION AUSTRALIAN OPEN
At Melbourne
Surface: Hard-outdoor

MEN'S SINGLES (fourth round) — Andrey Rublev (5), Russia, def. Holger Rune (9), Denmark, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (9). Ben Shelton, U.S., def. Jeffrey John Wolf, U.S., 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (4), 6-2. Tommy Paul, U.S., def. Roberto Bautista Agut (24), Spain, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5. Novak Djokovic (4), Serbia, def. Alex de Minaur (22), Australia, 6-2, 6-1, 6-2.

WOMEN'S SINGLES (fourth round) — Donna Vekic, Croatia, def. Linda Fruhvirtova, Czech Republic, 6-2, 1-6, 6-3. Magda Linette, Poland, def. Caroline Garcia (4), France, 7-6 (3), 6-4. Elena Rybakina (22), Kazakhstan, def. Jelena Ostapenko (17), Latvia, 6-2, 6-4.

MEN'S DOUBLES (third round) — Jean-Julien Rojer, Netherlands, and Marcelo Arevalo-Gonzalez (3), El Salvador, def. Robin Haase and Matwe Middelkoop (16), Netherlands, 6-3, 7-6 (6). Fabrice Martin and Jeremy Chardy, France, def. Alex Molcan, Slovakia, and Jiri Lehecka, Czech Republic, 7-6 (2), 6-3. Arthur Rinderknech and Benjamin Bonzi, France, def. Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (12), Colombia, 7-6 (5), 6-7 (6), 6-2. John Peers, Australia, and Andreas Mies (14), Germany, def. Luke Saville and Alex Bolt, Australia, 6-0, 6-3. Hugo Nys, Monaco, and Jan Zielinski, Poland, def. Rajeev Ram, U.S., and Joe Salisbury (2), Britain, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (6), 6-2. Jason Kubler and Rinky Hijikata, Australia, def. Gonzalo Escobar, Ecuador, and Tomislav Brkic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4. Hugo Nys, Monaco, and Jan Zielinski, Poland, def. Arthur Rinderknech and Benjamin Bonzi, France, 6-1, 6-4.

WOMEN'S DOUBLES (third round) — Shuko Aoyama and Ena Shibahara (10), Japan, def. Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, Russia, and Elena Rybakina, Kazakhstan, 6-2, 7-6 (7). Zhaoxuan Yang, China, and Hao-Ching Chan (11), Taiwan, def. Alison van Uytvanck, Belgium, and Anhelina Kalinina, Ukraine, 6-3, 7-5. Jessica Pegula and Coco Gauff (2), U.S., def. Aldila Sutjiadi, Indonesia, and Miyu Kato (16), Japan, 6-4, 6-2. Elena-Gabriela Ruse, Romania, and Marta Kostyuk, Ukraine, def. Marketa Vondrousova and Miriam Kolodziejova, Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4. Barbora Krejcikova and Katerina Siniakova (1), Czech Republic, def. Oksana Kalashnikova, Georgia, and Alycia Parks, U.S., 6-0, 6-3. Storm Sanders, Australia, and Elise Mertens (4), Belgium, def. Monica Niculescu, Romania, and Viktorija Golubic, Switzerland, 6-2, 6-2.

MIXED DOUBLES (quarterfinals) — Rafael Matos and Luisa Stefani, Brazil, def. John-Patrick Smith and Lizette Cabrera, Australia, 6-3, 6-4.

Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina advanced to the Australian Open semifinals with a 6-2, 6-4 win over former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko on Tuesday.

The match at Rod Laver Arena featured a rare rain delay of about 20 minutes while the roof was closed. Rybakina led 3-1 and was holding a break point before the delay. On return, Ostapenko saved the first break point, but Rybakina broke on her next opportunity to go up 4-1 and won the first set 6-2.

In the second set, Ostapenko was up a break but Rybakina leveled with a break of her own. It came on her first break point when Ostapenko had been unable to convert four in the previous game.

Rybakina, who beat top-seeded Iga Swiatek in the fourth round, set up match points with aces, both of which were saved by Ostapenko. But she clinched the match with another ace, her 11th of the match and a tournament-leading 35 overall.

"I was nervous in the last game, but I managed my emotions and played very well," Rybakina said. "The conditions were different after the roof was closed. But it can happen here, you never know, on the morning one weather and later it changes."

Rybakina will play the winner of the night quarterfinal between American Jessica Pegula, at No. 3 the highest women's seed remaining, and two-time champion Victoria Azarenka.

In the men's quarterfinals, 22-year-old American Sebastian Korda retired with a wrist injury in the third set against No. 18-seeded Karen Khachanov. In a late quarterfinal, third-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas was set to face Jiri Lehecka. The winners will play each other in the semifinals Friday.

Djokovic feels good, gets to quarterfinals

It took about a week for Novak Djokovic to go from worrying about whether he simply could play a match at all on his injured left hamstring to thinking he can win the Australian Open.

And one pain-free performance Monday in overwhelming 22nd-seeded Alex de Minaur 6-2, 6-1, 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals for the 13th time made a world of difference.

"Tonight, the way I played, the way I felt, gives me reason now to believe that I can go all the way," Djokovic said.

"I mean, I always believe I can go all the way, in terms of my tennis," said Djokovic, who looked like his usual flexible, court-covering self at Rod Laver Arena.

"But the way my leg felt before tonight wasn't giving me too many hopes, so to say, for the entire tournament, to go all the way through. Tonight I feel that, so I feel positive about it."

Djokovic won 42 of 64 points that lasted five shots or more. He accumulated a 26-9 edge in winners. He won all 12 of his service games, never facing a break point. Generally considered the best returner in the game now — and, perhaps, ever — Djokovic earned a dozen break chances and converted half.

Chen's toughest judge: his mom

[**Elliott,** from B10]
going to be upset about that toe-flip," he wrote.

After he attended a news conference and underwent drug testing, he spoke to Hetty and his family. "Seconds into the call, she asked me, 'What happened with the quad toe-triple flip? Why did you make that mistake?' " he wrote. "That was exactly her."

He wouldn't have it any other way. "No matter what I accomplish, if there's things that can be better she'll definitely make sure I know about it," Chen said last week between classes at Yale, where he has a year and a half remaining on his path to a degree in statistics and data science.

Chen collaborated on the book with Time writer Alice Park, typing his thoughts into a shared document between stops on the Stars on Ice tour last summer. He relied on Hetty, his siblings and his friends to confirm his memories and fill in some blanks about his childhood in Salt Lake City.

He remembers being inspired while skating in a rink that was a practice venue for the 2002 Salt Lake City Games. But he didn't recall posing for a photo with his two brothers in front of Rice-Eccles Stadium, where the Olympic flame had burned, standing near a sign with the Games motto, "Light the fire within." He wrote, "As I look back, this is probably where my Olympic journey really began."

Hetty also told him about the day he stood near the door of his rink and sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," as he had seen swimmer Michael Phelps do during a medal ceremony at the 2004 Summer Olympics. It made perfect sense to 5-year-old Nathan. He was pretending he had won a gold medal and had to practice the anthem.

"She was definitely very involved in helping me write that book in terms of whether the stories were correct from her perspective as well," Chen said. "It was kind of cool [to] look through all those bits and pieces and try to collect them into a cohesive story. It was a very reflective process for me."

The book, which honors his heritage by introducing each chapter with a Chinese proverb, has a matter-of-fact tone. But it deserves high scores for honest insights from Chen, who delves into what it took for him to reach the top of the figure skating world and describes the sacrifices made by his family. He's also frank about his implosion at the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics, where he felt paralyzed by grand expectations.

As a kid he competed in hockey and gymnastics and danced with a ballet company, but his figure skating talent stood above all. "I thrived on the feeling of power coming from zipping silently across a pristine, freshly cut sheet of ice," he wrote. Recognizing his ability, his parents drove him to Lake Arrowhead, among other spots, for the best coaching and facilities. They found sponsors and benefited from grants from a foundation established by Michael Weiss, a former U.S. champion who helps fund skaters in a forbiddingly expensive sport.

Chen won his first U.S. title in 2010, at the novice level and won his first of six straight senior level championships in 2017. He and defending champion Yuzuru Hanyu of Japan were co-favorites at the 2018 Olympics, but Chen couldn't control his nerves and dread.

"I saw the rings and I froze," he said of the Olympic symbol. He stumbled to 17th in the short program. Freed from pressure, he performed a lights-out free skate and climbed to fifth. He won the first of his three world championships in 2018.

He enrolled at Yale, planning to study and compete, but he had to adjust when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020. He was fortunate to practice at Great Park Ice in Irvine, where safety protocols were carefully maintained for him, coach Rafael Arutunian and other elite skaters. He expanded his team to add a mental coach, who taught him visualizing success would help him live it. A world-record score in the short program validated that at Beijing and set up his gold-medal triumph.

"That monkey had been on my back for so long," he wrote.

Chen has since collaborated on a picture book, "Wei Skates On," due to be published next month. It's about a fictional Chinese-American boy who finds inspiration in skating, with the help of his mother.

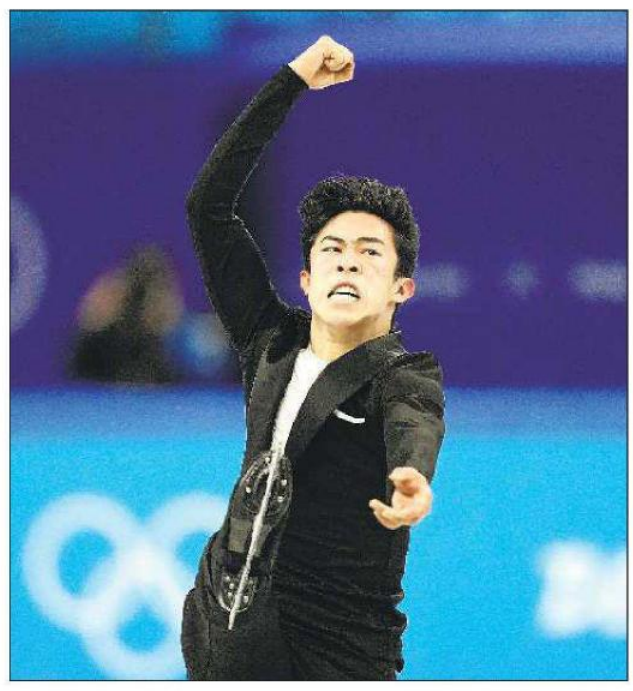
"I wanted it to be someone else. But I obviously have pieces of myself in it," he said.

The U.S. figure skating championships will be held this week in San Jose but Chen won't be there; he has competed every year starting in 2010. "There's things I really love and miss," he said of competing.

He hasn't closed the door on attempting a gold-medal repeat at the 2026 Cortina-Milano Olympics. "Nothing at all has been finalized. Nor do I think I really need to right now," he said.

"I have a lot of things that I'm engaged with but it's not something that I'm like, 'For sure, I don't want to do that ever again.' I want to maintain the option and just see how my body is doing, how my mind is doing, how my projects are doing."

His fire still burns. Thank his mother — and him — for whatever that fire might inspire him to do.



David J. Phillip Associated Press

NATHAN CHEN of the U.S. competes during the men's short program at the 2022 Winter Olympics.

Turner gives thanks to L.A.

Fan favorite wanted to re-sign with Dodgers before plan changed and he joined Boston.

By Jack Harris

In the weeks after he agreed to a two-year contract with the Boston Red Sox last month, Justin Turner started receiving presumptuous pieces of mail at his Southland home.

"We had like six or seven letters in our mailbox from realtors saying, 'Hey, we want to sell your house,' " Turner recalled with a laugh. "It was like, whoa, no one said we are boxing up and leaving."

But after an awkward end to his memorable nine-season tenure with the Dodgers this winter, the Southern California native still was adjusting to the fact Los Angeles is no longer his professional home.

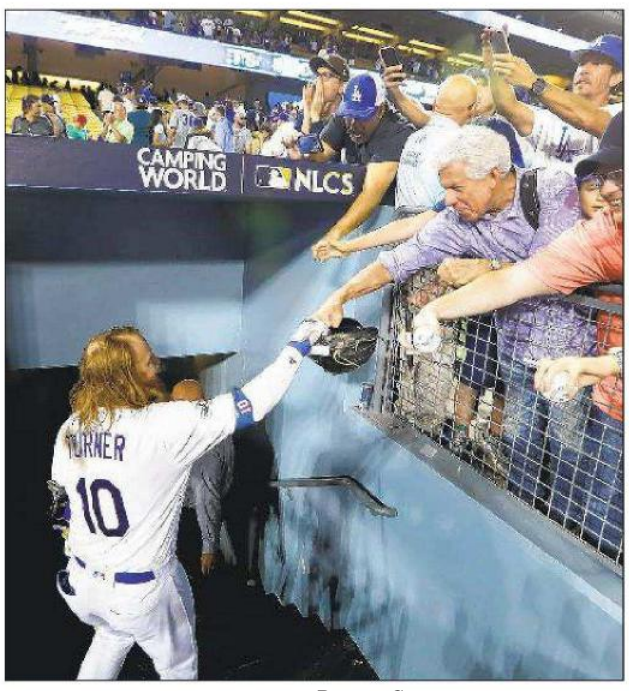
"It's still fairly fresh," Turner said during a charity event Sunday, his first public appearance in L.A. since he finalized his two-year, $22-million contract with the Red Sox.

"You hear that from a lot of guys, how tough free agency is," he added. "I think everyone has this picture in their mind of what they want or how they think it is gonna go. It just never really goes according to plan."

Indeed, staying with the Dodgers had been Plan A for Turner entering the offseason.

Even though the club declined his $16-million option for 2023, the 38-year-old publicly stated his desire to work out a new deal.

Having twice negotiated free-agent contracts to remain with the Dodgers, he held out hope the sides could hammer out another reunion.



Robert Gauthier Los Angeles Times

JUSTIN TURNER celebrates his game-winning homer for the Dodgers in Game 2 of the 2017 NLCS.

That possibility faded during a two-day stretch before the holidays.

After failing to bridge the gap with Turner, who was seeking multiyear offers after batting .278 with 13 home runs and 81 RBIs last season, the Dodgers instead agreed with J.D. Martinez on a one-year, $10-million contract Dec. 17 — effectively finding a cheaper option to replace the veteran Turner's right-handed bat in a predominantly designated hitting role.

The next afternoon, news broke that Turner and the Red Sox — Martinez's old team — agreed to their two-year pact, which includes a player option for 2024.

For Turner, the period since he reached the deal has been full of conflicting emotions.

He's eager for his opportunity in Boston, where he was recruited by other former Dodgers (Kiké Hernández chief among them) as well as New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick, who texted Turner to extol Boston's culture as a sports town.

Turner also is happy to be with another storied franchise and joked during an introductory news conference this month that he's looking forward to seeing would-be fly outs turn into doubles off the Green Monster in Fenway Park.

"I'm just excited to be part of their organization," Turner reiterated Sunday.

At the same time, Turner still seemed to be digesting his departure from the Dodgers. He struck a diplomatic tone while discussing his negotiations with the team.

"I don't think anything's gonna take away from the nine years that I had in L.A. as a Dodger," he said. "It was an absolutely incredible ride."

Still, he deflected when pressed further on whether he was surprised he and the club couldn't reach a new agreement.

"I don't think it does anyone any good to go back and speculate as to what happened," he said. "I don't want anything to blow back or taint the last nine years that I had and everything we accomplished."

He later added: "I'd rather celebrate the nine years than talk about maybe what could have been or should have been or didn't happen."

Turner spoke Sunday from the Dream Center in Echo Park, where the foundation he started with his wife, Kourtney, was hosting a fundraiser to celebrate "Justin Turner Day" — which the Los Angeles City Council recognized as Jan. 22 in 2019 to honor Turner's work in the community.

Though Turner is no longer a member of the organization, Dodgers fans still made up the vast majority of the more than 1,000 people who were expected to be in attendance.

Many wore blue shirts and No. 10 jerseys. (There was at least one Red Sox hat in the crowd, though it was donned by a woman also wearing one of Turner's Dodgers uniforms.) Dozens lined up for autographs, photos and a chance to thank the team's longtime third baseman.

And even as Turner prepared to begin a new chapter, they still treated the red-haired Lakewood native like a franchise icon.

"This is a good way to put a bow tie on everything," Turner said, gazing out at the crowd, "and say thank you to L.A. one last time."

PRO CALENDAR

	TUE 24	WED 25	THU 26	FRI 27	SAT 28
LAKERS	**CLIPPERS** 7 TNT	**SAN ANTONIO** 7:30 SpecSN			**at Boston** 5:30 Ch. 7
CLIPPERS	**at Lakers** 7 TNT		**SAN ANTONIO** 7:30 BSSC		**at Atlanta** 4:30 BSSC
KINGS	**at Philadelphia** 4 BSW			**at Florida** 4 BSW	**at Tampa Bay** 4 BSW
DUCKS	**at Arizona** 6 BSSC		**at Colorado** 6 BSW		**ARIZONA** 7:30 BSW

Shade denotes home game.

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
BASKETBALL		
4:30 p.m.	Boston at Miami	**TV:** TNT
4:30 p.m.	G League, Austin at Sioux Falls	**TV:** NBA
7 p.m.	Clippers at Lakers	**TV:** TNT **R:** 570, 710, 1220, 1330
COLLEGE BASKETBALL		
3:30 p.m.	Penn State at Rutgers	**TV:** Big Ten
4 p.m.	Ohio State at Illinois	**TV:** ESPN
4 p.m.	Louisiana State at Arkansas	**TV:** ESPN2
4 p.m.	DePaul at Georgetown	**TV:** FS1
4 p.m.	Missouri at Mississippi	**TV:** SEC
4 p.m.	Eastern Michigan at Toledo	**TV:** CBSSN
4 p.m.	Miami at Florida State	**TV:** ESPNU
4 p.m.	Notre Dame at North Carolina State	**TV:** ACC
6 p.m.	North Carolina at Syracuse	**TV:** ESPN
6 p.m.	Fresno State at Boise State	**TV:** FS1
6 p.m.	Kentucky at Vanderbilt	**TV:** SEC
6 p.m.	Indiana State at Drake	**TV:** CBSSN
6 p.m.	Kansas State at Iowa State	**TV:** ESPNU
6 p.m.	Georgia Tech at Clemson	**TV:** ACC
HOCKEY		
4 p.m.	Kings at Philadelphia	**TV:** BSW **R:** iHeart
6 p.m.	Ducks at Arizona	**TV:** BSSC **R:** Ducks Stream
SOCCER		
11:45 a.m.	Italy, AC Milan at Lazio	**TV:** CBSSN
1 p.m.	Uruguay, Boston River at River Plate	**TV:** GOLTV
4:30 p.m.	Uruguay, Cerro Largo at Defensor Sporting	**TV:** GOLTV
TENNIS		
4 p.m.	Australian Open, quarterfinals	**TV:** ESPND
6 p.m.	Australian Open, quarterfinals	**TV:** ESPN2

In Angels about-face, Moreno to remain owner

[**Angels,** from B10]
process should start. "Now is the time," Moreno said in a statement then.

It is not unheard of for an owner to field bids and decide not to sell because the bids had fallen short. In this case, with the Angels projected to sell for a record price for a Major League Baseball franchise — at least $2.5 billion — Moreno decided over the last week to simply call off the sale without taking any bids.

As the Angels fortified their roster this winter, Moreno is said to have become reinvigorated about retaining ownership, and as such his decision was not about how many potential buyers had materialized or what they might have bid.

More than half a dozen potential buyers had expressed interest, including Joe Lacob, owner of the defending NBA champion Golden State Warriors; Patrick Soon-Shiong, owner of the Los Angeles Times; and investors from Japan.

It is uncertain whether such a record MLB bid would have materialized. The Washington Nationals have not found a buyer despite being up for sale since April. The Baltimore Orioles and Miami Marlins could go up for sale soon, according to MLB sources who declined to be identified, and the Oakland Athletics and Tampa Bay Rays have yet to secure the new ballparks that each team has sought for more than a decade.

It also is uncertain whether an Angels bidder would have requested a price adjustment. The Angel Stadium lease expires in 2029, and an owner likely would have to choose among hundreds of millions of dollars in renovation costs, perhaps $1 billion for a new ballpark or trying to find a new location.

Moreno and the city of Anaheim had agreed to a deal in which he would keep the team in town through 2050, renovate or replace Angel Stadium at his cost, and build a neighborhood atop the stadium parking lots.

> 'He wants to win as badly as anybody, and our job right now is to give him that opportunity. He's given us the resources.'
>
> — Phil Nevin, Angels manager, on Arte Moreno, who decided not to sell the team

The city killed that deal in May amid a federal corruption investigation in which an FBI agent said former mayor Harry Sidhu shared confidential city information with the Angels in the hope of securing a $1-million campaign contribution from them. Sidhu resigned but has denied wrongdoing and has not been charged with a crime.

Still, the collapse of that deal marked the second time in a decade that the city had walked away from an agreement with Moreno, and he turned his attention to a potential sale of the team within weeks. It is uncertain whether he would consider a third round of negotiations with Anaheim.

"When the time is right, the city will be welcome and open to having those types of long-term discussions," Anaheim Mayor Ashleigh Aitken said. "Right now, we're going to let the dust settle."

Moreno's decision could complicate the Angels' efforts to retain superstar Shohei Ohtani, who can leave as a free agent after next season. Ohtani has made clear he wants to win. Under Moreno's ownership, the Angels have not won a postseason game since 2009 or played in one since 2014, tied with the Detroit Tigers for baseball's longest playoff drought.

In the fall, the Angels agreed to a one-year, $30-million contract with Ohtani, with Moreno intending to let a new owner consider a long-term deal with the star. That consideration now reverts to Moreno, who signed Mike Trout in 2019 to what is still the richest contract in baseball history: $426.5 million.

The Angels also agreed to a one-year contract with Phil Nevin, who finished last season as interim manager, so that a new owner could consider his own management team. That consideration also reverts to Moreno.

Under Moreno, the Angels have fallen behind their rivals in scouting and player development.

Nevin said he thought it was "awesome" that Moreno was staying.

"When you don't win, fans are going to point fingers at a lot of things, but they shouldn't be pointed in his direction," Nevin said. "He wants to win as badly as anybody, and our job right now is to give him that opportunity. He's given us the resources to put us in a good position for this, and now it's on us."

Moreno, 76, bought the Angels for $183.5 million in 2003, one year after the team won the title in its only World Series appearance in its 62-season history. Starting in 2004, the Angels won the American League West championship in five of six years.

However, the Angels have endured seven straight losing seasons. They sold 3 million tickets every year from 2003 to 2019 but sold just 2.46 million tickets last year.

Through a spokesperson, Moreno declined to comment beyond his statement.

"Despite strong buyer interest in the Angels, Arte Moreno's love of the game is most important to him," MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement. "I am very pleased that the Moreno Family has decided to continue owning the team."

"I wouldn't sell either," former Angels star Torii Hunter said. "The Angels are a Major League Baseball club, man, they're in Orange County, and I just think a little more marketing, a couple more wins, and that franchise is going to change."

Hunter said he had a pretty good idea of what Moreno meant when he said he had "unfinished business."

Said Hunter: "Pretty sure he's talking about a championship. I mean, you got two of the best players in the world. No matter who gets signed in the offseason, they [are] still the two best players in the world, right? Maybe you do need some pitching. So he probably has a plan, and I'm hoping that plan is within the next year or two, because the Angels are still my team."

Tim Salmon, a member of the Angels' Hall of Fame and a current broadcaster for the team, said he was "pleasantly surprised" by Moreno's decision to retain ownership.

"I like Arte," Salmon said. "I like the things he did. I'm a supporter. I think he's an owner who is passionate about winning, and every player would love to play for someone like that.

"And I know there are misgivings that people have when something doesn't turn out right, but at the end of the day, to wake up every winter and see the guy is signing everybody possible to make your team better ... I mean, I played 10 years here where we didn't do any of that, so the contrast is huge. And that's why I'm a huge proponent."

Moreno needs to focus on a lengthy to-do list

[**Hernández,** from B10]
was necessary for the Angels to retain Shohei Ohtani beyond the upcoming season.

"We are not ready to part ways with the fans, players, and our employees," Moreno said in a statement, coming across as willfully oblivious to how, at the very least, the fans don't feel the same about him.

Moreno won't be welcomed back with open arms, not with the Angels failing to reach the postseason for an eighth consecutive year and their image tarnished by a series of scandals.

Winning back the fans will require more than lowering beer prices.

If he wants to be accepted as the owner of one of this market's crown-jewel franchises, this is what he has to do:

1. Say something

Moreno last spoke publicly more than two years ago, on a video conference to introduce Perry Minasian as the team's general manager. Fewer than 2.5 million fans visited Angel Stadium last year, the first time in 20 years annual attendance was less than 3 million in a season unaffected by the pandemic. Who can blame the public for its skepticism, especially when Moreno won't talk about what's gone wrong on the field or what's being done to remedy the problems?

Moreno also would be smart to address the aborted sale of the team. In the news release, he mentioned "unfinished business," but does anyone think his goal is to win a World Series rather than sell the team in the future for a price he has in mind?

2. Complete the roster

In the same release, Moreno boasted about his team's record payroll, which is now more than $200 million. Well, now he can demonstrate how committed he is to winning. He should be prepared to venture into unfamiliar territory and go over the luxury-tax threshold of $233 million. What better sign of good faith than to make a high-priced addition at the trade deadline? In the meantime, the Angels can round out their pitching staff by picking up some of the solid arms that remain on the market, including starter Michael Wacha and reliever Andrew Chafin.

To his credit, Moreno allowed Minasian to improve the roster as he explored the sale. Now, Moreno has to allow Minasian to finish the job.

3. No more meddling

How much the Angels spend is less of a problem than on whom they spend. From slugger Albert Pujols to manager Joe Maddon, many of the Angels' ill-fated signings can be traced to Moreno, who has to let the baseball operations department run the baseball operations department. Moreno can't be blowing up trades, as he did before the 2020 season when his impatience cost the Angels a chance to acquire Joc Pederson and Ross Stripling.

4. No more cronyism

The first team president hired by Moreno was Dennis Kuhl, his fraternity brother at the University of Arizona. Kuhl was replaced by John Carpino, who used to work for Moreno's billboard company. The Arte Moreno Angels are basically the Jeanie Buss Lakers without the championship banners. Moreno should look outside for someone qualified to run his organization.

5. Solve the Angel Stadium problem

Last year, a corruption scandal prompted the Anaheim City Council to terminate the sale of Angel Stadium and its surrounding property, leaving the Angels without a long-term stadium solution. Moreno has to figure out something, not only to enhance the game-day experience for fans, but also to level the playing field for his players. Many nearby high schools have better weight rooms or batting cages than Angel Stadium.

6. Solve the other facilities problems

Many of Angel Stadium's shortcomings are shared by the team's spring training home, Tempe Diablo Stadium in Arizona. Something to consider:

When the major league team breaks camp, many of the organization's prospects remain there for extended spring training.

The Angels' triple-A affiliate in Utah will move into a new stadium next year. The organization's double-A team in Alabama also is said to have a first-rate stadium. This standard should be uniform across every level, including Class A, in which the Angels' two affiliates play in outdated facilities. The base of operations in the Dominican Republic also should be improved.

7. Fix the farm

Modernizing minor league stadiums would help the Angels repair their once-robust player-development system. Facilities are only part of the equation. Moreno has to invest more in scouting. He has to invest more in coaching. He has to continue investing in technological devices that can help coaches instruct players.

8. Know your market

The Angels' lack of commitment in their Spanish-language broadcasts was chronicled in a recent story by the Athletic. Of the three major league teams in Southern California, the Angels are the only one without full-time Spanish broadcasts. This has to change. Anaheim is roughly half Latino and neighboring Santa Ana is approximately three-quarters Latino.

9. Re-sign Ohtani

If Moreno can't hold on to the best player in the game, what is he doing in this business? Ohtani's next deal could be worth more than $500 million, but Moreno will have to be willing to invest more than that. The Angels can't point to the salaries of Ohtani, Mike Trout and Anthony Rendon, and use them as an excuse not to spend on the remainder of their roster. This very well could make the Angels frequent luxury-tax violators. Moreno might say that's unfair, but it's not. That's the cost of operating a major franchise in this market.

Of course, money isn't the only obstacle. The Angels have to convince Ohtani they can win.

To do that, they have to address the first eight action items on this to-do list.

SPORTS

Chen's mother still inspires

HELENE ELLIOTT

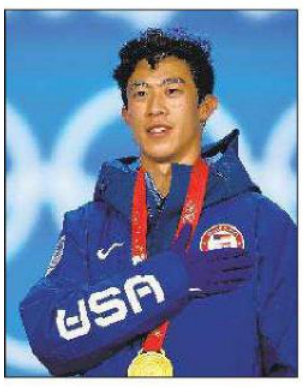
After Nathan Chen had impressed a panel of figure skating judges at the Beijing Olympics last February by performing a vibrant and challenging free skate program that lifted him above a formidable field and secured his long-awaited gold medal, he had to face his toughest judge: his mother.

Beijing-born Hetty Chen, who cleaned houses and worked as a medical interpreter to finance his figure skating career and the pursuits of her four older kids, had advocated for him. Coached him. Protected him, too, though her thrifty purchase of white hockey skates instead of the standard black wasn't a hit.

She also had a way of keeping him grounded that allowed him to soar, and he thought of her in the moments before he became the first Asian American man to win an Olympic singles figure skating gold medal.

Skating to Elton John's "Rocket Man," Chen began his three-jump combination with a quadruple toe loop but didn't have enough momentum to finish with a triple flip. Instead, he ended with a single flip. He recovered quickly and soon realized he would win. Even so, as he said in his recent memoir, "One Jump at a Time," he expected to hear about his misstep. "Ma is

[See **Elliott,** B8]



JAE C. HONG Associated Press

NATHAN CHEN won a 2022 Olympic gold medal.

JAE C. HONG Associated Press

ANGELS OWNER Arte Moreno and Shohei Ohtani shake hands Dec. 9, 2017, as the team introduced the two-way talent from Japan. Securing a long-term deal for Ohtani reverts to Moreno, who reversed course five months after saying he was exploring a team sale.

Angels remove for sale sign

Moreno has a long to-do list and not much time after sudden about-face

DYLAN HERNÁNDEZ

The grumpy neighbor who owns the dilapidated house on the corner has waded through the overgrown weeds in his front yard and removed the "For Sale" sign.

Arte Moreno is staying.

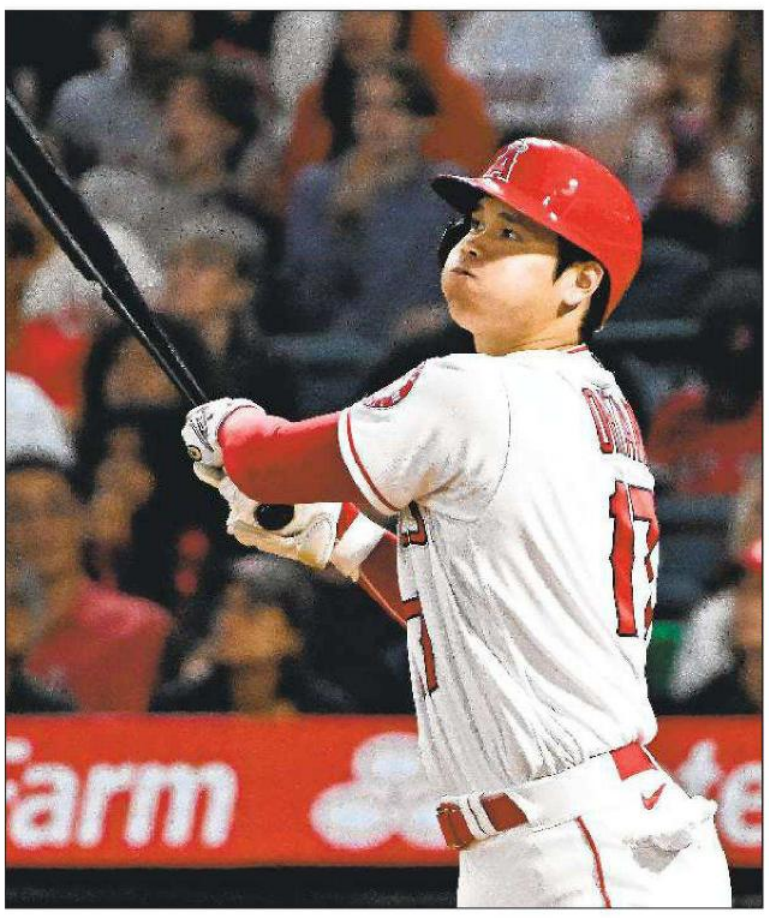
Five months after he started exploring a sale of the Angels, Moreno said he would remain the owner of the Anaheim franchise, his decision announced Monday in a news release.

So much for the visions of a deep-pocketed buyer transforming the Angels the way Guggenheim Baseball Management did the Dodgers.

So much for the anticipation of a new owner investing in the Angels the way Steve Cohen has in the New York Mets.

So much for the miracle that

[See **Hernández,** B9]



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

OHTANI, under contract for 2023, and Mike Trout give the Angels stars to build around. The team last made the playoffs in 2014.

Owner changes mind, will retain his team to keep swinging for a ring

BY BILL SHAIKIN AND MIKE DIGIOVANNA

On second thought, Arte Moreno decided not to sell the Angels.

On Monday, five months after putting the team up for sale, Moreno announced he would retain ownership. Potential buyers had been reviewing team finances and visiting Angel Stadium, and initial bids were due next month.

"During this process, it became clear that we have unfinished business and feel we can make a positive impact on the future of the team and the fan experience," Moreno said in a statement. "This offseason we committed to a franchise record player payroll and still want to accomplish our goal of bringing a World Series Championship back to our fans."

In August, Moreno announced he had hired an investment bank, stopping short of unconditionally committing to a sale but saying the

[See **Angels,** B9]

PG-13 EARNS PG RATING

George currently Clippers' de facto point guard, but will it continue?

BY ANDREW GREIF

DALLAS — The point guard and the pupil sat next to each other on a padded section of the scorer's table Sunday afternoon in Dallas, two minds trying to arrive at one vision for the final quarter of an eventual Clippers victory.

Expect more of the same as coach Tyronn Lue, a former NBA point guard, entrusts wing Paul George with a new role of de facto point guard, a job he began in a win Friday night in San Antonio and continued in Sunday's victory against the Mavericks.

Two years after Lue challenged George and Kawhi Leonard to improve their playmaking and George carried it out through working with former point guard and team assistant Chauncey Billups, George said that experience gave him comfort in recent days when coaches asked him to initiate the offense more following his return from a hamstring injury.

The move comes with the team's traditional point guards in flux: Reserve John Wall is out at least another week with an abdominal injury, while longtime starter Reggie Jackson was moved to the bench two weeks ago, his ballhandling duties initially going to wing Terance Mann.

Mann remains a starter. And Leonard initiates the offense as well. But now George is handling a larger share of bringing the ball upcourt, a job he said feels "natural."

"I told PG, 'You're not a traditional

[See **Clippers,** B7]

ERIC GAY Associated Press

PAUL GEORGE has filled in at point guard the last two games and the offense hasn't missed a beat, averaging 133.9 points per 100 possessions.

Lakers hope swap meets needs with Hachimura move

Trade for Wizards' big forward is a lower-tier, sensible deal to help with size and scoring.

BY DAN WOIKE

Hachimura

Nunn

The Lakers — the team whose trade aspirations have been dissected and discussed since the offseason — made a trade Monday, their fans collectively reacting in a singular way.

Finally.

The team sent a trio of second-round picks and guard Kendrick Nunn to Washington for Rui Hachimura, a 6-foot-8 hybrid forward who turns 25 in a couple of weeks.

Instead of starting trade season with a blockbuster deal highlighted by either their 2027 or 2029 first-round picks, the Lakers struck a more sensible note in trading for the former lottery pick.

The deal, which became official Monday afternoon, required the Lakers to trade Chicago's 2023 second-rounder, which they had acquired, and their own 2029 second-rounder. The Lakers also will swap 2028 second-round picks if the Wizards' is higher than theirs.

The Lakers addressed some obvious needs and better balanced their roster by swapping out a small guard for a big wing.

Hachimura is kind of a classic "buy low" player. He has the size and shooting you'd want out of a modern power forward, but durability and roster construc-

[See **Lakers,** B6]

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SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

MARIAH TAUGER Los Angeles Times

ACTORS Cleopatra Coleman, from left, Mia Goth and Alexander Skarsgård star in writer-director Brandon Cronenberg's "Infinity Pool," which hits theaters Friday. Also at Sundance, the much-anticipated "Cat Person," based on the 2017 Kristen Roupenian story, and the Ukraine war documentary "20 Days in Mariupol." See **E3**.

A WELCOME DISTURBANCE

Brandon Cronenberg shares the strange trip behind his film

BY MARK OLSEN

PARK CITY, Utah — Over three feature films, Brandon Cronenberg has carved out a distinctive style for himself, a blend of horror and sci-fi that musters an all-too-rare audience response of genuine shock. His latest film, "Infinity Pool," may be the most disturbing and unsettling film at Sundance this year, forcing viewers to confront what they might actually be capable of — all told in a hallucinatory, brain-melting, head-spinning style.

In the film, James (Alexander Skarsgård) and his wife Em (Cleopatra Coleman) go on holiday to a remote all-inclusive resort in hopes of breaking through his writer's block. Since the publication of one book some years ago, James has been unable to finish anything else and essentially lives off Em's family money.

After they meet the enigmatic Gabi (Mia Goth), they go with her for an excursion outside the resort grounds. When James kills someone with a car in an accident, he is faced with the decision of whether to be executed or pay to have an exact double of himself created and killed in his place. This leads James into a decadent underworld that forces him to face himself in unexpected ways.

Shot in Croatia and Hungary, the film is reminiscent of, but not [See **'Pool,'** E2]

Serene odes to 1871 victims

CAROLINA A. MIRANDA

In 2021, the Los Angeles mayor's office kicked off a process to create a memorial to mark the Chinese Massacre of 1871, a brutal mob attack that left 18 Chinese men dead at a time when the city's population was barely 5,700. Now that selection process has reached the finalist stage.

Six designs have been chosen by a nine-member review panel made up of artists, architects, curators and other cultural leaders, per an announcement last week from the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument. The proposals take various approaches to marking the horrific event, which spread across downtown after being sparked near the Plaza de Los Angeles, a significant Chinese enclave at the time.

A submission by artist Sze Tsung Nicolás Leong and writer Judy Chui-Hua Chung was inspired by the spiritual and protective properties of banyan trees in Guangdong, the province from which many early Chinese immigrants originated. Their proposal features installations composed of sculptural objects resembling petrified trees in the locations where the massacre took place.

A proposal by L.A.-based firm Fung + Blatt Architects likewise opts for multiple locations, marking the sites of lynchings — near the plaza and south of the 101 Freeway. Their monuments consist of boulder-like structures

[See **Memorial,** E6]

Spotify reduces its staff by 6%

CEO Daniel Ek cites "efficiency" as the reason for layoffs, part of a recent tech trend.

BY WENDY LEE

Spotify on Monday said it is cutting 6% of its staff, following a wave of layoffs at other tech and entertainment businesses as they adjust to a challenging economic environment.

As part of the move, the Swedish music-streaming giant said that Chief Content Officer and Advertising Business Officer Dawn Ostroff is leaving.

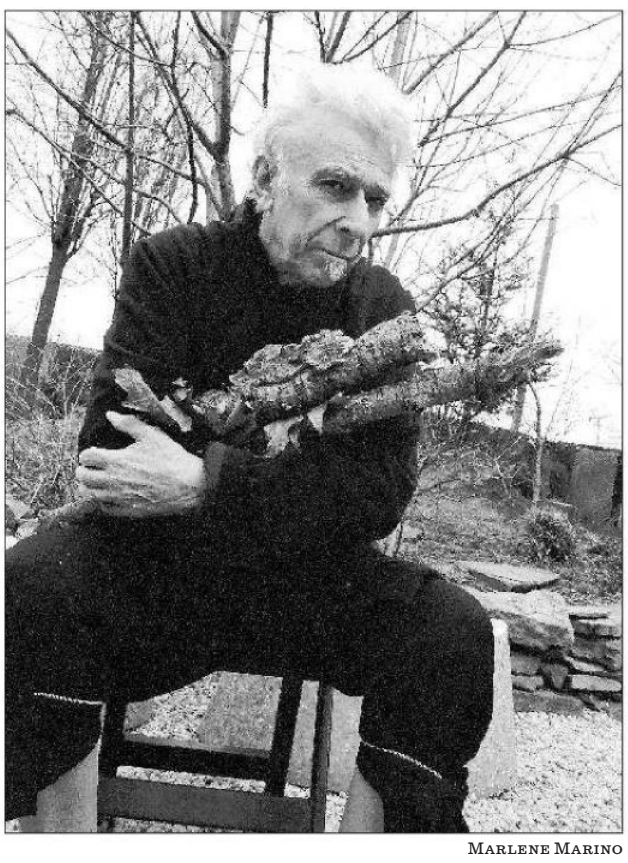
A key architect of Spotify's podcast strategy, Ostroff joined the company as it made large audio and advertising investments, acquiring production companies and making podcast deals with newsmakers and celebrities.

But the company's aggressive investments in the podcast space have drawn more scrutiny amid a cooling economy.

Spotify CEO Daniel Ek said the layoffs were reflective of Spotify's need to be more efficient.

"We still spend far too

[See **Spotify,** E2]



MARLENE MARINO

AT 80, John Cale is looking back at creative partners like David Bowie and Nico while pushing forward.

Cale embraces the winter chill

'Mercy,' filled with new collaborators and honoring old ones, extends his influence.

BY ROB TANNENBAUM

Here are two widely known facts about John Cale: He was a founding member of the Velvet Underground, and infused the group with its astringent avant-garde sensibility; and he once decapitated a chicken onstage and chucked it at the audience, causing some of his band members to quit.

"It was the most effective show-stopper I ever came up with," he wrote unrepentantly in his 1999 memoir, "What's Welsh for Zen."

Cale's place in music history includes not only the first two Velvet Underground albums, but also his production work on influential debut albums by the Modern Lovers, the Patti Smith Group and the Stooges, and a string of solo albums that mix excoriating tales of violence like "Gun," "Dead or Alive" and "Fear Is a Man's Best Friend" with stately and unsettled ballads, including "You Know More Than I Know," "Buffalo Ballet" and "I Keep a Close Watch."

On "Mercy," Cale's first album of new songs since 2012, he brought in collaborators for more than half of the songs, including electro-pop duo Sylvan Esso and

[See **Cale,** E6]

RICK LOOMIS For The Times

EXITING Chief Content Officer Dawn Ostroff.

Spotify adds to tech layoffs

[**Spotify,** from E1]
much time syncing on slightly different strategies, which slows us down," Ek wrote in a blog post Monday. "And in a challenging economic environment, efficiency takes on greater importance. So, in an effort to drive more efficiency, control costs, and speed up decision-making, I have decided to restructure our organization."

The cuts will impact roughly 600 people, according to a person close to Spotify who declined to be named.

Julie McNamara, head of talk studios, and Max Cutler, head of talk creator content and partnerships, will remain in their roles, and the company will continue to invest in original and exclusive podcasts, the person said.

Last year, the company scrapped 11 podcasts and laid off nearly 40 people from its podcasting staff.

Ostroff joined Spotify in 2018 and oversaw a rapid expansion of the company's foray into podcasting with shows featuring Kim Kardashian, former President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama, and Prince Harry and his wife, the former Meghan Markle. Among its most popular podcasts is "The Joe Rogan Experience," which has an exclusive licensing deal on the platform.

In the transition, Spotify said Ostroff will be a senior advisor. She was not available for an interview.

Ostroff was previously president of Condé Nast Entertainment, building the company's digital video business and overseeing its film and TV operations. Her long career in the entertainment industry has also included stints at Disney, Fox, Lifetime, UPN and the CW Network.

Alex Norström, Spotify's chief business officer, will assume responsibility for content, advertising and licensing. Ek said he will be centralizing the majority of engineering and product work under Norström and Chief Product Officer Gustav Söderström.

"Like many other leaders, I hoped to sustain the strong tailwinds from the pandemic and believed that our broad global business and lower risk to the impact of a slowdown in ads would insulate us," Ek wrote.

"In hindsight, I was too ambitious in investing ahead of our revenue growth."

Spotify has invested heavily in tools that make it easier for users to upload their podcasts onto the platform. Last year, Ek said Spotify worked with 11 million creators.

"Because the podcast strategy was pretty expensive ... they're probably looking at different types of content streams that are much more cost-effective," said Ray Wang, principal analyst at Palo Alto-based Constellation Research.

The company's restructuring comes as large tech companies including Meta, Google and Amazon have been laying off thousands of workers. Last week alone, there were 21,000 job reductions announced in the tech industry, Wang said.

"Every single tech company is trying to cull their employees," he added. "It's like management du jour, everyone is going and laying off 5 to 10% of their workers."

Over the last few years, Spotify has expanded its presence in audiobooks and live audio.

In 2021, the company opened a new L.A. office with a cluster of podcast studios known as Pod City. Spotify declined to say how many L.A. employees would be affected by the layoffs.

But, after a period of rapid growth and expansion during the pandemic, the podcast industry has begun to contract.

The number of new podcasts dropped to 219,805 in 2022, compared with 729,495 podcasts in 2021, according to podcast search engine and database Listen Notes.

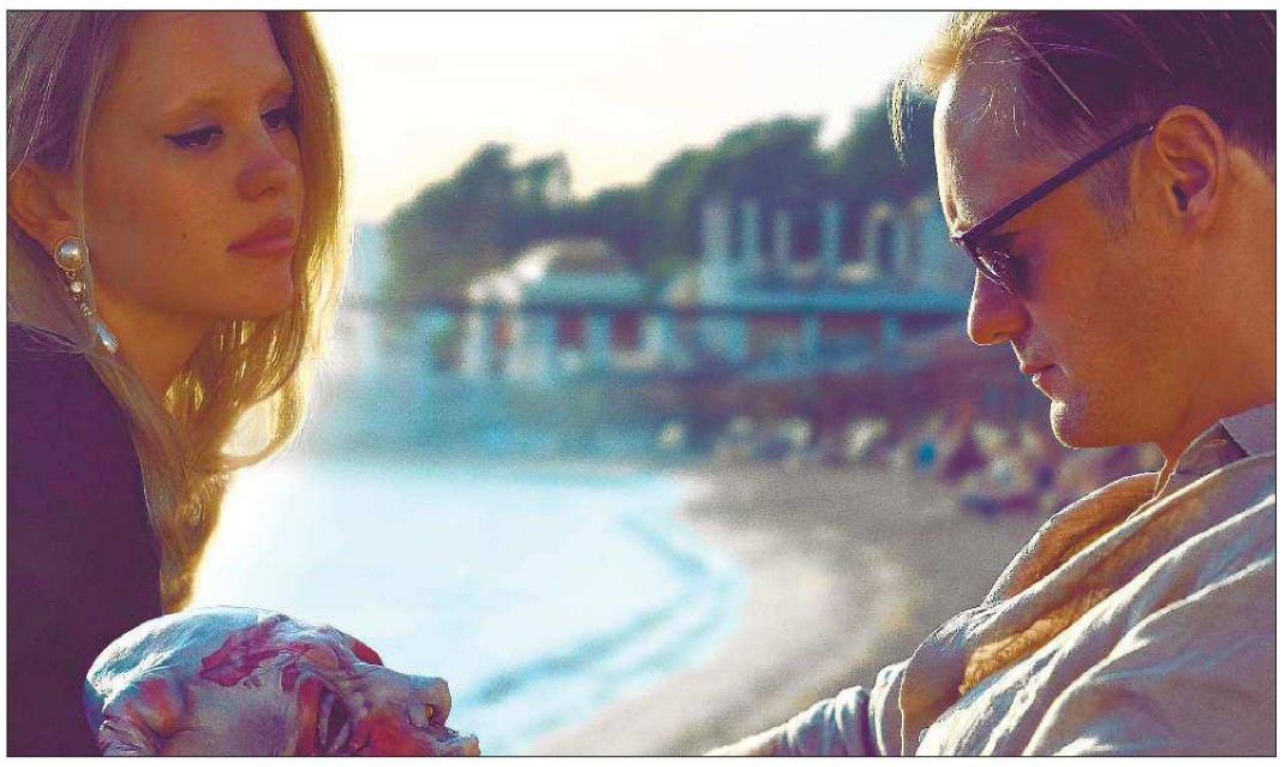
Ben Davis, a partner in digital media at talent agency WME, said he started seeing a slowdown in podcast deals starting in the fourth quarter, reflecting broader economic trends.

"You were just seeing a slowing down or people tending to be more risk averse when it comes to the guarantees that they were willing to make," Davis said. "So a buyer might say, 'Hey, I can't write a big guarantee, but we'll give you a larger share of the upside or we can't do a big exclusive deal right now.' "

He said, however, that podcasts remain a popular form of entertainment and that the industry will rebound.

DON EMMERT AFP / Getty Images

SPOTIFY CEO Daniel Ek explained the planned restructuring of his company in a blog post Monday.



Neon

MIA GOTH, left, loved the role of Gabi instantly. To Alexander Skarsgård, the film "was tonally so different."

A laboratory 'for the mind to explore'

[**'Pool,'** from E1]
quite analogous to other recent projects skewering the blinkered lives of the wealthy and privileged such as "Triangle of Sadness," "Succession," "Glass Onion," "The Menu" or "The White Lotus." Cronenberg's film is too psychotronic and just plain weird for that, obsessed as it is with death and depravity alongside responsibility and accountability.

Ahead of the festival, Cronenberg and Goth joined The Times on a video call together, while Skarsgård was interviewed separately due to his shooting schedule on the next season of "Succession."

Skarsgård had been told good things about Cronenberg before the shoot by his friend Andrea Riseborough, who starred in Cronenberg's previous film, "Possessor." Yet Skarsgård still wasn't prepared for the person he encountered compared to the movies that Cronenberg makes.

"He's such a gentle, sweet, unassuming guy. So humble," said Skarsgård. "And the fact that he comes up with these crazy, twisted, dark, hedonistic stories, maybe it's his way of conducting therapy, that it's cathartic in the way that dark s— comes out in his writing. Because he's definitely not what I expected when I met him."

As Goth put it, "One of the things that I love about Brandon's movies is the fact that it's not a sit-back-and-relax type of experience. Rather, you watch his movies and it's lean-in and-engage. From the very first scene you are locked in."

Brandon, did you go on a bad vacation? Was that the initial impulse behind the story?

Brandon Cronenberg: I did go on a bad vacation. Is it that obvious? Honestly, it was kind of a mash-up. Quite a while ago, I'd been writing a short story specifically about the clone executions. It was essentially the first execution scene as a story. And when I started expanding it, I ended up coming back to memories of this weird vacation that I'd had many years ago. The only time I went to a traditional all-inclusive resort, I think it was in the Dominican Republic. The thing about that trip was that they would bus you in in the middle of the night to this resort compound. You just step off the bus into this completely enclosed compound that was actually encased by razor-wire fences hidden by palm leaves. And you were stuck on this compound. There was kind of a fake town that you could buy stuff at. And the Chinese restaurant and the guy on the ATV were from that vacation.

And then at the end of the week, they'd drive you back during the day and you would see that actually there was this really incredible poverty just beyond the resort, the people living in shacks. And it was obviously a very disturbing and grotesque contrast. But also there's something so completely surreal about the experience because it's almost like you were visiting a completely separate state other than the host state. It was like a completely different world or another dimension that had sort of popped up in this country, like a weird growth. And the fact that inside that growth you existed in this complete Disneyland version of reality was surreal. And it felt like a good setting for this story about consequence-free characters.

Mia, what appealed to you about the story when it was first presented to you?

Mia Goth: I was in the middle of filming "Pearl," actually. And that shoot was really intense. We were doing six-day weeks and like 12-, 14-, 15-hour days, and regardless of all that, the first Sunday I had off, I woke up, I had my breakfast, I had my coffee, and the first thing I did was I opened the script and started reading it. And I knew about four pages in. I was like, "Wow, this is wild. I have to do this." ... I love Gabi. Reading the script the first time around, she even fooled me. She presents herself in so many different ways within the movie, and I thought she was going to be one thing and she took me on this wild ride with her.

Alexander, coming after "The Northman," this feels like such a huge pivot, to play this character that's so weak and humiliated throughout the movie. This is not a typical leading man part at all.

Alexander Skarsgård: "The Northman" was such a monumental, thrilling and exhausting experience. It was arguably the most rewarding creative experience of my life. But I was completely drained after that, because not only did we spend almost a year shooting "The Northman," but it was many years in the making and developing the movie and living with that character in that world. I read "Infinity Pool" when we were shooting "The Northman" in Northern Ireland, so it was towards the tail end of the shoot. And just reading something that was tonally so different, a character that wasn't a hero, or had any of those alpha-male qualities. He definitely wasn't a leader of men and he definitely had lower levels of testosterone than Amleth on "The Northman." And that really excited me. It was just so fun to imagine going into that after "The Northman."

Brandon, I found the movie to be so destabilizing, I felt genuinely emotionally unmoored when it was over. How do you describe that? What to you is the tone of the movie?

Cronenberg: I don't really describe the tone of the movie, is the answer. And I sort of don't want to, because I feel to a certain degree you want the audience to explore. Certain kinds of filmmaking end up working as laboratories for the mind to explore these difficult emotions and feelings. And to me that's why I like this kind of filmmaking. I like being put in a position where you are destabilized when you're watching a film. I think that kind of art is more transformative, taking you to places that might be difficult but also that allow you to engage with aspects of your brain that you might not in a day-to-day way. I think that's really healthy. And I think that's something that I really like in art. So I don't want to tell people what the tone is. I think that's something sort of hard to categorize, but I also don't want to paint the film as being something in particular for people. I want them to have a chance to explore it on their own and define it for themselves.

How do you conceive of the actual mechanics of how the doubling process occurs? Do you like taking this sort of fantastic idea and making it as much of a reality as you can?

Cronenberg: Yes, although I'd say in this film, it's deliberately a bit absurd and not really meant to be a convincing hard sci-fi movie about cloning technology. It's really kind of like magic realism, or in that spirit, because it's more of a metaphorical point. I mean, why would this technology exist only in this country? It's not meant to make sense in a kind of literal sci-fi world-building way. It's meant to be a little bit dreamlike and strange to then be able to get to the other stuff. And of course it's fun to design it.

And some of the designs came from our experiences location hunting. We were in countries that actually had histories of authoritarianism and communism. We shot in this old power station. The exterior of it was an aesthetic that we borrowed from the location. And so it was very much defined by our experiences over there, rather than something that was totally designed and then forced into.

Goth: That power station was amazing. That was one of my favorite shooting locations I've ever been on. I've never seen anything like that. It was huge. And still strangely intact.

Skarsgård: I love the way they designed all that because it felt very rudimentary and rough. Because when you think of the fact that they're capable of cloning a body, you would imagine it to be in a more futuristic, sci-fi environment where it's this very austere, clean lab and they do it in a high-tech, cool fashion with computers and stuff. But this is very manual and very analog with big hoses and weird s—. I thought that was a really interesting choice by Brandon to go in that direction instead of making it look futuristic. It was all like a dirty old East European factory.

Mia, there's a moment in the movie where you're lying on the hood of a car as it's slowly moving and you're eating from a bucket of chicken as Alex walks in front of the car. That image is really absurd but also really unnerving. Did that moment stick out to you?

Goth: Yes, because it's a wild scene. But really every day on Brandon's set felt like I was sitting on the hood of a car eating a bucket of chicken.

Cronenberg: Can we put that on the Blu-ray? Could that be a cover quote?

Goth: What I mean by that is Brandon as a director is so trusting and he gives so much freedom to his actors and it's such a joy to work with a director like that. Really I think that's the sign of a great director, someone who chooses their actors and feels that they're appropriate for the role and then after that they're really able to kind of release control of the character and just let that actor explore and play with it and ultimately have a lot of fun with it. And so there wasn't a dull day on set. Every day there was a different adventure, there was a different wild situation that we were finding ourselves in. And so I guess the scene with the chicken is kind of the climax of what the whole shooting experience was.

Skarsgård: That scene was a fantastic day. When we get into that, when he tries to get away, it's also kind of weird and pathetic and sad and there's that fight and she's just laughing at him. It's just this really humiliating moment for him — most of the movie is humiliating, just like a sequence of humiliation moments for him. But I just remember turning around, looking at Mia having a little picnic on the hood as they're slowly driving by. She's so funny in that scene.

Brandon, I had the pleasure of talking to your father, David Cronenberg, last year when his movie "Crimes of the Future" was coming out, and he talked about how excited he was that when he was shooting his movie in Greece, you weren't that far away shooting your movie in Croatia. Was it fun for you to be close to him while you were both shooting?

Cronenberg: It was cute. I think he had a better hat than I had though, so that was a little bit uncomfortable for me.

Like his onset directing hat?

Cronenberg: His onset directing hat was much better than mine, from what I understand. So that was maybe a problem.

Unlike a lot of people who come from notable families, you seem quite open about being influenced by your father's work. You don't seem to mind people comparing them. Was it difficult for you to acknowledge your father's influence on your own work?

Cronenberg: I don't know if I've necessarily acknowledged it. That's a bit of a loaded question. It was always going to be the case when I got into movies and I didn't want to worry about it because I think deliberately avoiding anything that would be considered related to his work would be defining my own art in relation to his art. And I actually don't want to do that. So for my own work, I'm just following my own interests and preoccupations and if there's some overlap, we're related — I guess that's natural.

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LIVING PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:30
NO BEARS 1:20 4:20 7:10
THE FABELMANS PG-13 1:00 7:00

NEWHALL 22500 Lyons Ave. Santa Clarita
MISSING PG-13 1:10 4:20 7:20
THE SON PG-13 4:20 PM
A MAN CALLED OTTO PG-13 1:00 4:00 7:00
PLANE R 1:20 4:10 7:20
M3GAN PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:30
PUSS IN BOOTS: THE LAST WISH PG 1:30 4:30 7:10
AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER PG-13 1:20 6:30
THE WHALE R 7:10 PM
THE FABELMANS PG-13 1:00 PM

GLENDALE 207 N. Maryland Ave Glendale
NEW GODS: YANG JIAN SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH; 1:20 4:15 7:15
THE SON PG-13 1:10 4:10
BEAUTIFUL BEINGS SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH; 1:00 PM
SKINAMARINK 7:10 PM
BROKER R SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH; 4:00 PM
CORSAGE 4:20 PM
LIVING PG-13 7:20 PM
THE SUPER 8 YEARS SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH; 1:00 PM
ALL THE BEAUTY AND THE BLOODSHED 1:00 PM
EO SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH; 7:30 PM
DECISION TO LEAVE SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH; 6:55 PM
TRIANGLE OF SADNESS R 3:40 PM

NoHo 7 5240 Lankershim Blvd. No. Hollywood
IN FROM THE SIDE 12:55 7:00
THE SON PG-13 1:00 4:15
WOMEN TALKING PG-13 1:20 4:20 7:20
PLANE R 1:20 4:10 7:15
SAINT OMER PG-13 4:00 PM
SKINAMARINK 7:30 PM
M3GAN PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:30
THE WHALE R 1:10 4:10 7:10
THE FABELMANS PG-13 1:00 4:00 6:55

CLAREMONT 450 W. 2nd Street Claremont
THE SON PG-13 4:10 7:10
A MAN CALLED OTTO PG-13 1:00 4:10 7:10
SAINT OMER PG-13 4:00 PM
BROKER R 4:00 PM
NO BEARS 1:15 PM
PUSS IN BOOTS: THE LAST WISH PG 1:30 4:30 7:20
THE SUPER 8 YEARS 1:00 PM
THE WHALE R 1:10 7:00

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SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

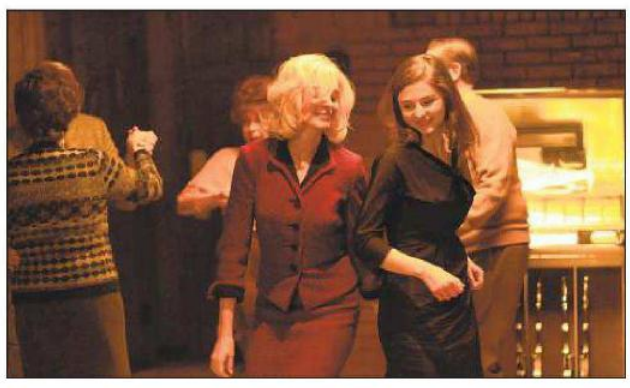
Literary adaptations cause quite the stir

'Cat Person' degrades a viral sensation as 'Eileen' chills with a harrowing turn.

JUSTIN CHANG
FILM CRITIC

Photographs from Sundance Institute

EMILIA JONES and Nicholas Braun in "Cat Person," which was adapted from a New Yorker short story.



ANNE HATHAWAY, left, and Thomasin McKenzie in "Eileen," based on a 2015 Ottessa Moshfegh novel.

PARK CITY, Utah — Late into "Cat Person," the much-buzzed-about new movie adapted from Kristen Roupenian's 2017 short story of the same title, an ugly one-word text message appears in startling, screen-filling closeup. You'll know what the word is if you've read the story, and there's a decent chance you have, since it is one of the more widely circulated and ferociously debated fiction pieces published by the New Yorker in recent memory.

Still, to judge by the gasps that greeted that word at the movie's Sundance Film Festival premiere Saturday night, there were clearly many in the audience who hadn't. Presumably they were also unaware that the word is also the very last word of Roupenian's story, which, unlike the movie, does not proceed to devolve into a bloody, fiery and spectacularly violent mess.

Don't worry, I haven't just ruined "Cat Person" for you. In some ways it would be fitting if I did, since the movie, directed by Susanna Fogel ("The Spy Who Dumped Me") from a script by Michelle Ashford, more or less ruins the story. I'm not a purist when it comes to adaptations; my general rule of thumb is that the more irreverent liberties a movie takes with its source material, the better. But there is nothing better about this "Cat Person," which coarsens, flattens and torturously over-elaborates a story whose elegant concision was precisely what made it such rich and elastic interpretive fodder.

Was Roupenian's yarn an intensely relatable account of an ill-advised romance, or a slippery consideration of the shifting power differential between an older man and a younger woman? A cautionary tale about the perils of modern dating, the devilishness of technology or the ambiguity of consent? A spot-on encapsulation of a woman's point of view or a mean-spirited exercise in fat-shaming?

The filmmakers have at least attempted to preempt the latter charge: Robert, portly on the page, is played here by the very tall and lanky Nicholas Braun ("Succession"), who otherwise projects the character's requisite weird mix of curtness and sensitivity, sweetness and schlubbiness.

Those qualities are what strangely endear him to Margot (Emilia Jones), a 20-year-old college student who works at the concession stand of a movie theater that Robert visits often. And so begins (and soon ends) a relationship that — advancing swiftly from long, lively text chains to an awkward date and a night of epically bad sex, at least for Margot — serves as a timely reminder of the sometimes yawning chasm between who we think we might be dating and who they really are.

All that is on the screen, more or less, plus Harrison Ford references, a scary dog, several obtuse fantasy/hallucination sequences and some deliciously blunt commentary on insect mating habits provided by a professor (Isabella Rossellini) whom I immediately wanted to follow into a movie of her own ("Ant Person," naturally). Geraldine Viswanathan ("Blockers") is also very good as the opinionated bestie who notes early and often that this relationship is clearly not very good, and who is no less annoying for being absolutely correct.

All in all, you can't fault the actors in "Cat Person," least of all Jones, who's entirely believable and empathetic here as a young woman who can be both cutting and vulnerable, cynical and naive. (The most amusing way to approach "Cat Person" is to see it as a parallel-universe sequel to Jones' off-to-college arc in "CODA.")

But you can easily fault some of Fogel and Ashford's more bludgeoning storytelling choices, including the ways they've chosen to visualize their heroine's active fantasy life. Again and again, and in ways that are neither as creepy nor as funny as intended, Margot imagines the worst-case scenario (i.e., Robert lunging violently at her in a locked darkroom) long before the actual worst-case scenario kicks in.

The movie is far better when it simply allows her fears to play out, without any cutesy comic annotation: The scene in which Robert kisses Margot for seemingly minutes on end, his lips sucking away somewhere in the vicinity of her mouth and nose, is one of the few where you can see what this "Cat Person" might have been in more cinematically confident hands.

Far clunkier is the inevitable bad-sex scene, a kind of out-of-body experience in which Margot and her own eye-rolling double narrate what's being done to her in real time, moment by awful, cringe-inducing moment. In that sequence and others, "Cat Person" labors to open up material that simply doesn't want to be opened up — that thrives on a level of subjectivity, and on a sustained ambiguity of intent and detail, that the movies have always been hard-pressed to replicate.

None of which is to suggest that Roupenian's story is unfilmable, only that it hasn't been well filmed. As hot properties go, the story has clearly been seized upon for its title recognition and viral cachet, but also with seemingly minimal consideration of why it cried out to be made into a movie — let alone the violent genre movie into which it abruptly swerves in its final act.

Is this swerve meant to boost "Cat Person's" commercial prospects in an industry where horror is one of the few genres that can still reliably turn a profit? Or to literalize the notion that, duh, relationships can be scary?

If so, a much more effective demonstration of that principle could be found in William Oldroyd's nastily unpredictable "Eileen," which premiered immediately before "Cat Person," at the same venue, for reasons that I can only suspect gave the festival programmers a chuckle. For "Eileen" — although set in snowy 1964 Massachusetts and centered on the bond that forms between two women — is also very much about the seductiveness of appearances and the thrill and disappointment of new relationships. And no less than "Cat Person," it's a portrait of a young woman negotiating complex, often contradictory feelings and often envisioning the most violent outcome to any situation.

Feelings of any kind, beyond everyday depression and anger, seem awfully scarce in the community where the sad-eyed, sexually frustrated Eileen (a superb Thomasin McKenzie) lives with her hard-drinking lout of a father (Shea Whigham) and works in a boys' prison. It's there that she strikes up a rapport with the prison's new psychologist, Rebecca (Anne Hathaway, stunning), whose impossible sophistication and glamour stand out in these dreary surroundings, and who upon arrival immediately fixes Eileen with a conspiratorial smile. As Rebecca takes Eileen under wing, talking shop and taking her out for drinks and dancing, you might find yourself wondering if you're watching Oldroyd's version of "Carol" — not just because of the intimations of lesbian desire, but also because of the unmistakable Patricia Highsmithian vibes at work. And then the story makes its sudden, harrowing shift into — well, to say more about that would be unfair.

But speaking of unfair: Does "Eileen" benefit from the fact that I haven't read the 2015 Ottessa Moshfegh novel on which it's based, unlike "Cat Person," which was adapted from a short and endlessly scrutinized story that I had read in advance? How much of this has to do with filmmaking, good or bad, and how much of it has to do with one's own expectations?

It's a fair question, though I suspect that even had I known every "Eileen" plot beat in advance, I would still have been held by Oldroyd's directorial control (as evident here as in "Lady Macbeth"), by the movie's chilly New England atmosphere and faultless '60s production design, and especially by Hathaway's silky poise and McKenzie's roiling mischief. Certainly I would have been held by Marin Ireland's startlingly raw performance as a woman who reminds you — in ways that other movies could stand to learn — that there is in fact always more to the story, and that more is often terrifying.

THE WIDE SHOT

Mariupol documentary spirals into darkness

By Matt Brennan

Mstyslav Chernov

"20 DAYS IN MARIUPOL": AP photographer Evgeniy Maloletka at work.

PARK CITY, Utah — A near-apocalyptic diary of life under siege, "20 Days in Mariupol" finds filmmaker and Associated Press videographer Mstyslav Chernov and his colleagues, photographer Evgeniy Maloletka and field producer Vasilisa Stepanenko, confronting the horror of war and chronicling it.

At the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine early last year, the Kharkiv native, a veteran of conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, set out to create a record of the attack on his homeland, only to find himself drawn into what he described to The Times as "the swift spiraling into the darkness" of the surrounded city on the Sea of Azov, first through Russia's indiscriminate bombings, then the collapse of the electricity grid and healthcare system, and finally looting, exodus and (ongoing) occupation. The result, at once haunting and riveting, is populated with panicked women, crying children, grief-stricken men, frustrated doctors and rueful journalists, all endeavoring to maintain their humanity, and to save others', in the face of incalculable loss — all framed by Chernov's poetically matter-of-fact narration and excerpts from the cable news programs on which his damning footage appeared.

I sat down with Chernov on Sunday in the L.A. Times Studio at Sundance to discuss the film, which screens Wednesday and Thursday at the festival. A production of Frontline and the Associated Press, the film is planning a theatrical release and, one hopes, an Oscar campaign; no television air date has been set. Chernov wore a simple black jacket with a press badge sewn on the left arm, as if to underscore his voice-over in the film: "This is a historical war," he indelibly concludes. "To not document it is impossible."

Your voice-over narration adds a layer of self-reflection different from the kinds of journalistic dispatches we're used to.

It goes far, far beyond Mariupol. I've been doing news for nine years already. I'm a conflict journalist and my main job for AP is to shoot news dispatches, and that's what I wanted to do in Mariupol. I went there and I shot video news dispatches and I sent them when it was possible — not every day, but as often as possible. These are short-format news, quick turnaround. ... It made a very strong impact on me as a human seeing all these conflicts, knowing that there was a war, an invasion of my country. And I always wanted to go deeper, to be able to ask questions, not only to tell what's happening, but be able to question, Why? What does it mean?

The second reason why this film took this form is because, when our team broke out of Mariupol with all this 30 hours of footage, considering that only around 40 minutes was published before that, I understood that I really wanted to tell a bigger story which will show the scale and also intensity of the suffering of residents. But at the same time, I wanted the audience to see the dynamic of this fall, the swift spiraling into the darkness. I started to search for the appropriate device for that. This was not the first choice, but it seemed to be the one which would help to connect all of the pieces of the puzzle, all of the small stories.

It felt like in certain moments you were struggling with the divide between "My job here is to document, but someone right in front of me is suffering." Were you feeling that in the moment?

Of course I felt that conflict, which is not really a conflict when you look deeper. We could drop the camera and help doctors to carry the gurney. Or when we slept in the hospital for a few days and there were not enough doctors, we would just carry food to different floors of the hospital. These are very natural things to do.

I remember a small editorial argument I used to have in Iraq when I was shooting refugees in Mosul, and I'm filming and you could see me at some point reaching my hands and helping the refugee into the truck. And I remember there was a conversation [whether] that should make it in the news report or not. I think I made this decision for myself a long time ago: Whenever I see someone needs help, and there is no one else to help them, I would just help. And if a person is getting necessary help, then I would just keep filming.

About the use of the footage as it aired on news networks in Europe and the U.S.: I read it as both a record of what images were coming out at the time, but also possibly as a concern that it didn't have the impact in real time that you hoped.

When we were in Mariupol those 20 days, I had almost no idea, because I just had no possibility to understand the impact. I had hoped that it would get to a wider audience and, of course, I was told by editors that it is so widely published. But whether it was having an impact on anything or not, I did not know. And I think we *will not* know; still there has some time to pass. ... Some civilians and doctors who left after the siege was over, many of them told me that either relatives found their beloved ones because they saw them in the footage. The mayor's office of the city, which is in exile right now, sent us a letter that because of our footage at that time we helped them to convince politicians to fight for opening up the green corridor. So I do hope that it made a difference and saved lives. However, even if it didn't, it will still remain as a record, or as a warning. So whenever someone wants to see how the full-scale invasion started, whenever someone needs to understand what happened to Mariupol, go back in time, see the film.

Making the film, the impact is one of the discoveries. But how do you show the ripples of information and the effects on the media space around the world? So then we decided to show the raw footage, and then to show how it looks in the news. ... This person came to me and said, "Now I know what happened in Mariupol and the horrors that you went through. But also, I will never watch news footage in the same way again, because it gives me a perspective what's happening behind the camera."

It is completely different when a scene that's as tense as something like when the tanks arrive goes on for minutes and minutes.

I have been able to shoot maybe 1% of everything that was happening. It's just a tiny fraction. And that is partially why I feel so guilty. All those shots I've seen with my eyes but did not shoot for some reason, because I did not have my camera on. The Mariupol Drama Theater bombing happened the day after we left. We'd been to that shelter. We knew hundreds of people were there. So we knew immediately if that shelter got bombed, it's a terrible tragedy.

Then again, when you build a film, you're leaving scenes because they don't fit into the arc. They just distract. There is this scene which I really wanted to be there in another hospital where there were people without kidneys on dialysis and the hospital was running on generators. And the chief of the ward told me, "I don't know what we're going to do. There are 20 people here. And the generator is running out of fuel. As soon as this shuts down in two days, all of these people are going to be dead. And they were. I couldn't fit all the children who have died, but also because it would be too heavy and probably would push the audience away.

Was that conscious when you were in the edit?

All I needed to do was edit to convey what was really happening. That is the challenge, because when you lay out everything that was filmed, you suddenly feel that the real tension is lost. It's like there's a huge explosion near you, but your microphone can record only certain frequencies of it. Same as images. ... If I was shooting this now, I would shoot it differently. I would shoot more.

Is there a next story you want to report?

Making the film has impacted how I now film and send news packages. My shots became longer and I stick to people for longer and my questions are different now. My questions are more about feelings than about events. This film has changed me as a news reporter. Of course there are so many stories. I really want to do more about Mariupol. I wish I could come back someday and do a second film. ... Right now I will come back to news gathering. I will come back to my daily job sending news dispatches from the front lines.

COMICS

SUDOKU

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8	4			7			6	
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Level: Gentle

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4				6	
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				2	5

Level: Gentle

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7	2	6	3	1	4	5	9	8
5	1	3	8	9	2	4	6	7
8	9	4	5	6	7	3	2	1
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3	4	1	6	7	9	2	8	5
9	6	7	2	5	8	1	4	3

1	3	6	5	2	4			
5	4	2	6	1	3			
3	5	1	2	4	6			
2	6	4	1	3	5			
4	1	5	3	6	2			
6	2	3	4	5	1			

1/24/23

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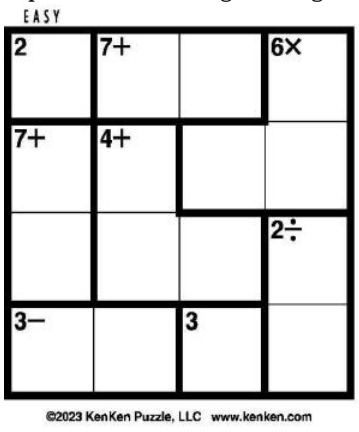
Solutions to Monday's puzzles

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit *www.sudoku.org.uk*.

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

EASY



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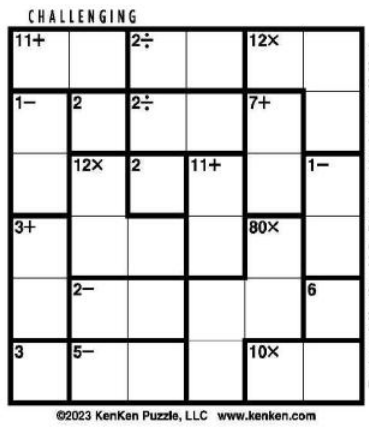
CHALLENGING



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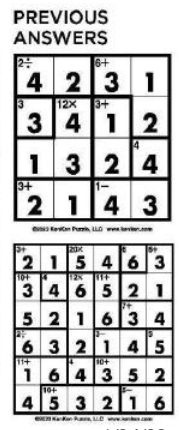
PREVIOUS ANSWERS



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1/24/23

HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis

Aries (March 21-April 19): Whatever state you're going for, pretend you're already in it. Before you know it, you won't be pretending anymore.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): It's counterproductive to overwork, though it can also be hard to tell if you need to push through tiredness or embrace the lazy. Trust yourself.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): You keep going because you're persistent but also hopeful. What's your best move? The next one!

Cancer (June 22-July 22): Well-intentioned friends, parents and leaders don't always teach us the right things. It's a day to figure out which information is wrong and make corrections.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): There are those who seem to enjoy complaining. Maybe you'll be inspired to solve the problem, which won't stop the complaining, but it will change the direction it flows.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Various curiosities and passions will intermingle in one particularly interesting project.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): You won't have as much time as you'd like to do what you want to do. If you approach with confidence and poise, you may be able to buy more time.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): If someone feels safe enough to open up to you, you consider this an honor, especially if you're in a position to help.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): When there's nothing you would change about the scene, you've achieved happiness.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You prize honesty, but a certain amount of showmanship is smart too. It will keep people engaged and focused on the parts you prefer they would see.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It's not always terrible or dangerous when the lines between dreams and reality are blurred.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Like a fallen tree in the road after a storm, you've come upon blocks you have no control over, but you might have something to do with the clearing.

Today's birthday (Jan. 24): You think you know what your favorites are, but this year brings a whole new slew of them. You have a talent for pricing your work, and financial wins keep coming. More highlights: a sacred calling, the continual polishing of your talent and someone you teach who wins your heart. Virgo and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers: 7, 10, 3, 33 and 17.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol and Joyce Nichols Lewis
By Rebecca Goldstein

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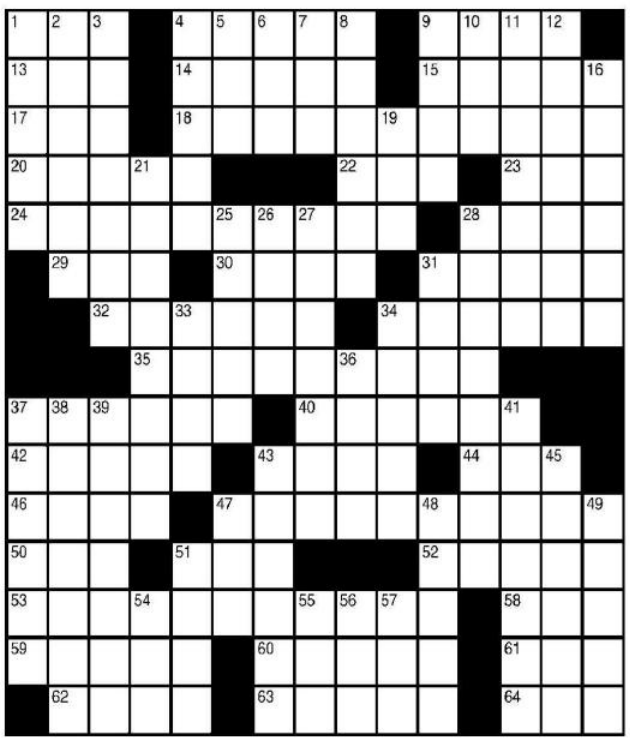

ACROSS
1 Cert. for some babysitters
4 Golden St. region
9 Chase a fly, maybe
13 Summer arrival
14 "Sweet Love" singer Baker
15 Maker of G-Shock watches
17 Sci-fi invaders
18 *Traditional Thanksgiving entree
20 Venezuelan cornmeal cake
22 "Big Blue"
23 Certain sib
24 *Feature of anxiety, often
28 N. Dak. neighbor
29 Egyptian boy king
30 Novelist Jaffe
31 Mean monster
32 Cultural no-nos
34 Successful dogcatcher, e.g.
35 *The "order" part of a "Law & Order" episode
37 "Or even less"
40 Hardly fresh
42 Alexander Hamilton's birth island
43 __-false test
44 This minute
46 Trashy place?
47 *Piano lesson pages
50 Words of agreement
51 Big part of an alligator
52 Bygone anesthetic
53 "Enough already!" or what one may do to each answer to a starred clue
58 "How Easy Is That?" cookbook writer Garten
59 Aromatic bulb
60 Brief appearance in a film
61 Tony winner Vereen
62 Group after boomers
63 City considered Japan's cultural capital
64 Biblical craft

DOWN
1 See-through
2 Domesticated rodent
3 Circular diamond shape
4 See-through wrap
5 Grammy-winning Yoko
6 "Homeland" org.
7 @ signs
8 Sonia Sotomayor, for one
9 Film on a pond
10 "This means __!"
11 Invites to dinner, maybe
12 Connect with
16 Raw bar mollusk
19 Letters on an incomplete schedule
21 Crunchy hummus scooper
25 Backsplash binder
26 "Wuthering Heights" setting
27 About to happen
28 Nattily dressed snack food mascot
31 Rager
33 Feathery accessories
34 Military rookie
36 Whodunit board game
37 "Closer to Fine" duo __ Girls
38 In a row?
39 Lifetime channel offering
41 Japanese electronics giant
43 Hitting sound
45 Ballpark frank
47 Won at musical chairs
48 "I feel the same way"
49 Curmudgeon
51 Curse
54 Geologic time unit
55 Line in a child's drawing of the sun
56 Full of feelings
57 "Quiet on the __!"

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

H	E	A	V	E		E	M	O		B	L	A	M	E
A	D	M	I	T		D	O	N		T	O	T	A	L
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U	S	U	R	P		B	A	S	T	E		E	L	F
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W	H	O	P			O	P	I	E		B	E	C	K
E	E	R	I	E		B	E	G	P	A	R	D	O	N
P	A	R	T	S		O	R	E		V	E	N	M	O
T	R	E	A	T		T	A	R		A	D	A	P	T

1/24/23

BRIDGE

By Frank Stewart

Tuesday, Jan. 24. It was cool in Los Angeles. We were working the day watch out of Bunco. My partner's Bill Gannon. He's a good player. My name's Friday.

We got a call about a scam at a Ventura club. The suspect was still playing. One of his opponents told us, "It was terrible, officer."

"Just the facts, ma'am."

"That man sitting South conned us out of a game. I led the king of spades against four hearts and shifted to a trump, won by dummy's king. Declarer next led the queen of spades ... and threw a diamond!

"When I took the ace, I naturally led a diamond. South won with the ace and pitched clubs on the jack of diamonds and jack of spades. He's a grifter. Nab him!"

We arrested South on a charge of deceptive play. At trial, the judge said he wished he played as well.

(In an expert partnership, East would follow with his lowest spade on the queen, suggesting a shift to the low-ranking suit, so South's ruse wouldn't work.)

You hold: ♠ A K 10 5 ♥ 7 3 ♦ 8 5 4 2 ♣ 9 5 4. The dealer, at your left, opens two diamonds (a weak two-bid). Your partner doubles, you bid two spades and partner raises to three spades. What do you say?

Answer: Your response ("advance" in modern terminology) promised no strength, but partner was willing to undertake a nine-trick contract. Since you have seven good points, to bid four spades is clear.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ Q J 4 2
♥ K
♦ K J 6
♣ Q J 10 6 2

WEST
♠ A K 10 5
♥ 7 3
♦ 8 5 4 2
♣ 9 5 4

EAST
♠ 8 7 6 3
♥ Q J 5
♦ 10 9 7
♣ A K 7

SOUTH
♠ 9
♥ A 10 9 8 6 4 2
♦ A Q 3
♣ 8 3

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 NT	Pass
4 ♥	All Pass		

Opening lead — ♠ K

Tribune Content Agency

ASK AMY

Violated without consent

Dear Amy: I am a woman in a long-term relationship with a man.

We have a good relationship, talking through issues and agreeing on most things. When we disagree, we communicate, clear the air and move on.

The other night, my partner woke up in the middle of the night and performed a sex act with me that I did not enjoy and would never consent to, had I been asked.

I did not stop it or verbalize non-consent.

I took a few days to process the incident. I then tried to discuss it with him.

He said he vaguely remembers this but claims to remember no details.

He said he feels bad that this happened. I asked for time to process my feelings.

He wants to jump straight back into our usual, physically affectionate relationship, but I don't think I want that yet.

I know he'll be disappointed but respectful if I ask him to hold off on sex, but that can't last forever.

How can I continue to process my emotions about this, and work toward building emotional and physical intimacy with my partner?

I can't afford therapy right now, and I'm not sure if I even know how I feel in order to be able to talk about it.

Confused and Concerned

Dear Confused: I'd wonder why your partner did this — and why he claims not to remember. Does he have a sleep disorder? Is he taking a drug that has affected both his behavior and memory?

If so, he obviously needs to disclose this to you.

If not, his memory is unacceptably vague.

The issue of consent between lovers can seem complicated, but your partner performing a sex act "with" you in the middle of the night is a violation — regardless of whether you verbalized lack of consent at the time.

This is your body. Asleep or half-asleep, you were not in a position to offer or refuse consent.

Because he won't acknowledge your legitimate concern about his behavior, your partner wants to simply resume your physical relationship, but this would not resolve anything for you.

You seem to frame this as your problem to solve. It's not. You shouldn't need to "ask him to hold off," as if he would be doing you a favor while you "get over" this.

If he wants to resume your emotional and physical relationship, he should work hard to understand your reaction and rebuild trust.

I urge counseling for you. RAINN.org offers a 24-hour chat helpline.

Dear Amy: If I ask my husband a question like, "Do you mind if I turn this program off, or are you listening to it?" he answers yes or no. These one-word answers do not make his meaning clear.

He says it is my fault for asking two questions, but I maintain that even a two-word answer would make his meaning clear.

He thinks I'm being unreasonable and should limit myself to one question.

I think my way of asking is only polite. Am I wrong?

MS

Dear MS: If you want a straightforward answer, ask a simple question.

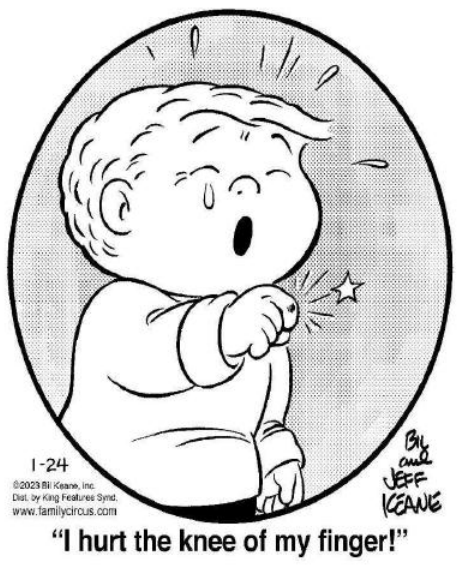
I agree that your habit of asking two potentially opposing questions forces your husband to issue more than a one-word response.

I agree that your way of asking is polite.

And I hope you will both agree that spouses should do their best to be generous in their communications.

Email questions to Amy Dickinson at *askamy@amydickinson.com*.

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham

REPLY ALL LITE By Donna Lewis

My morning routine involves several practice rounds of wake up.
get a signed print: cartoons@replyallcomic.com
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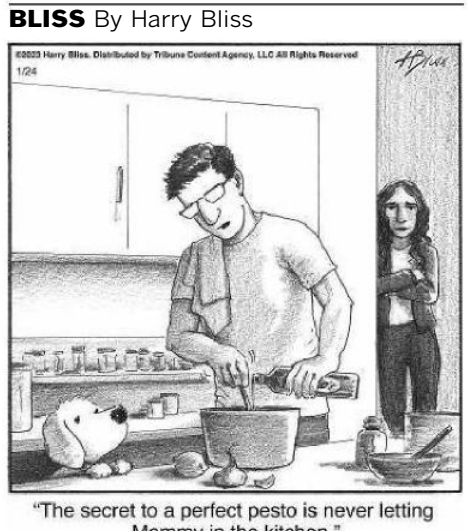
1-24

MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson

BLISS By Harry Bliss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1/24
"The secret to a perfect pesto is never letting Mommy in the kitchen."

SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly

COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz

Barrio Bugle
WE <3 SANTOS
WHO THE HECK ARE YOU- WAIT! AREN'T YOU THAT NEW CONGRESSMAN, GEORGE SANTOS?
IF YOU WANT ME TO BE.
HOW CAN I HELP YOU?
I MIGHT NEED A NEW JOB.
WHAT CAN YOU DO?
I'M A CARTOONIST. I CREATED A COMIC STRIP CALLED "PEANUTS." HEARD OF IT?

CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia

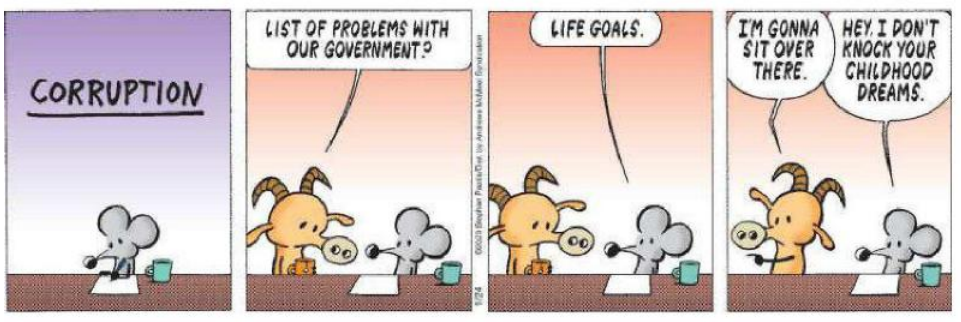
KEVIN, I WOULDN'T BE A GOOD FRIEND IF I DIDN'T GO ON RECORD AND SAY THIS IS A BAD IDEA.
WEARING GLASSES DOES NOT MAKE YOU SMARTER, AND YOU REALLY NEED TO PASS THIS QUIZ IF YOU DON'T WANNA REPEAT THE THIRD GRADE.
OUCH!
ARE YOU OKAY?
I'VE BEEN GETTING THESE SHARP HEADACHES ALL DAY.
RIGHT BEHIND MY EYES.
YOU DON'T SAY?
WHAT DO YOU THINK'S CAUSING THAT?
I'M GONNA GUESS FROM YOUR TONE THAT IT'S NOT MY BRAIN GROWING.

CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell

I WANT MY SON TO BE ABLE TO DO ALL THE THINGS I CAN'T DO.
THAT'S WHY I ENROLLED HIM IN LESSONS FOR CHESS, PIANO, SWIMMING, DANCE, ARCHERY, CAMPING, CELLO, GUITAR, PAINTING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING.
THERE'S ONE MORE THING YOU CAN'T DO, LEMONT: RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME IN THE WEEK FOR ALL THAT.
GOOD THINKING. I'LL ALSO ENROLL HIM IN A TIME MANAGEMENT COURSE.
DIOS MIO.
BUY CANDORVILLE BOOKS AT WWW.CANDORVILLE.COM

HALF FULL By Maria Scrivan

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis


CORRUPTION
LIST OF PROBLEMS WITH OUR GOVERNMENT?
LIFE GOALS.
I'M GONNA SIT OVER THERE.
HEY. I DON'T KNOCK YOUR CHILDHOOD DREAMS.

LIO By Mark Tatulli

BBRRRRRR RRRRR
Thank you for participating in our annual GIANT ROBOT CONTEST! If you missed it, we'll see you next year!
MarkTatulli.com
gocomics.com

ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

ARE YOU GOING TO THE MARKET?
YES. DO YOU WANT SOMETHING?
YEAH. YOU KNOW THE BIG AISLE WITH ALL OF THE SALTY SNACK STUFF?
GET THAT.
ONE BAG OF CARROT STICKS. GOT IT.

TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter

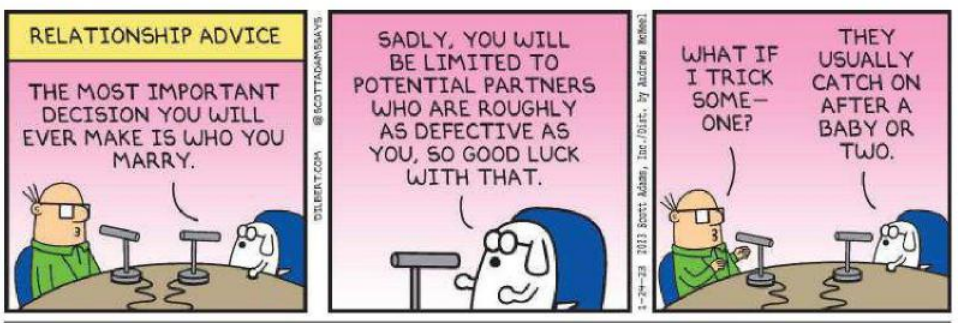
THE QUAKER OATS MAN AT HOME
WHAT'S A GUY HAVE TO DO TO GET SOME BACON AND EGGS AROUND HERE?
1-24
©Tundra 2023
www.tundracomics.com

SIX CHIX By Bianca Xunise

FRAZZ By Jef Mallett

NON SEQUITUR By Wiley

DILBERT By Scott Adams


RELATIONSHIP ADVICE
THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION YOU WILL EVER MAKE IS WHO YOU MARRY.
SADLY, YOU WILL BE LIMITED TO POTENTIAL PARTNERS WHO ARE ROUGHLY AS DEFECTIVE AS YOU, SO GOOD LUCK WITH THAT.
WHAT IF I TRICK SOME-ONE?
THEY USUALLY CATCH ON AFTER A BABY OR TWO.
DILBERT.COM @SCOTTADAMSSAYS

BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman

OKAY, HAMMIE, I WANT YOU TO TELL ME EVERYTHING.
AND REMEMBER, THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE.
HA!
THE LAST TIME IT SET ME FREE, I WASN'T ALLOWED OUT OF MY ROOM ALL DAY.

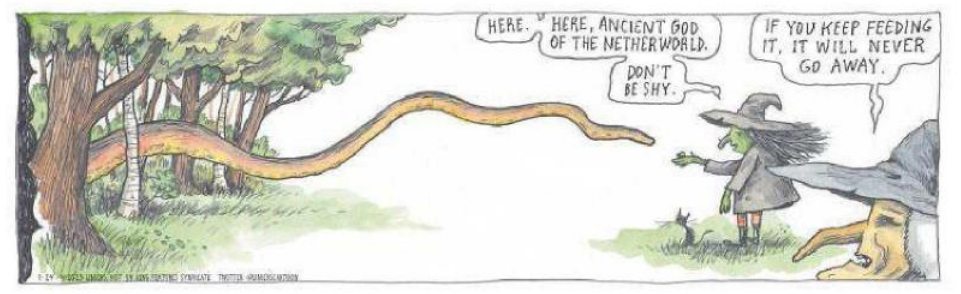
CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers

(TEN MINUTES AGO)
911... WHAT'S YOUR EMERGENCY?
WELL, IT ACTUALLY HASN'T STARTED YET...
BUT IT SHOULD ANY SECOND!
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books

JUMP START By Robb Armstrong

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, CAPTAIN RUIZ-
PLEASE- IT'S YOLANDA!
OK...YOLANDA... YOU'RE THINKING I MUST BE A LOSER WITHOUT ANY FRIENDS!
ACTUALLY, I'M THINKING THAT THIS "BRIDESMAID GATHERING" IS SMART!
I ELOPED IN VEGAS. SOME OF MY FRIENDS STILL DON'T KNOW I'M MARRIED!

MACANUDO By Liniers



BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall

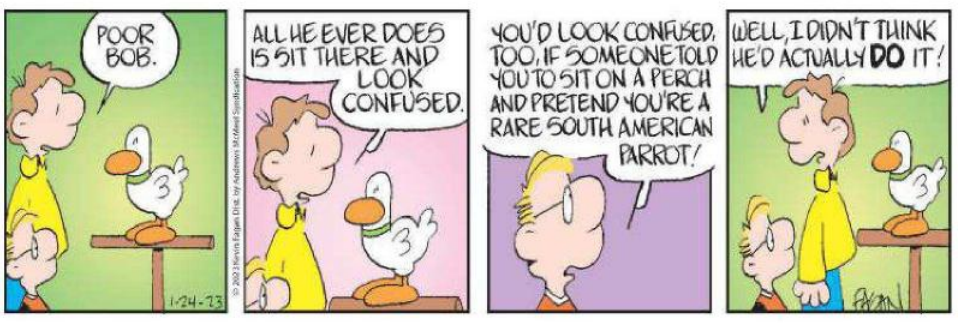
BOY, I COULD REALLY GO FOR A COLD MEATLOAF SANDWICH ABOUT NOW
OH, I'M SORRY, SWEETHEART
I GAVE THE LAST SLICE OF MEATLOAF TO DAISY A FEW MINUTES AGO
YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUB IT IN, YOU KNOW
URP!

BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy

HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW THE TERM "SELF-CARE" IS A PREVALENT BUZZWORD LATELY?
"SELF-CARE"?
YES-LIKE IF YOU WERE IN AN AIRPLANE AND THE OXYGEN MASKS DROPPED
-YOU NEED TO PUT YOURS ON FIRST SO YOU'RE ABLE TO HELP SOMEONE ELSE
SO THE POINT OF SELF-CARE IS TO BE SELFLESS
"THERE IS NOTHING MORE DECEPTIVE THAN AN OBVIOUS FACT"

BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro

DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan


POOR BOB.
ALL HE EVER DOES IS SIT THERE AND LOOK CONFUSED.
YOU'D LOOK CONFUSED, TOO, IF SOMEONE TOLD YOU TO SIT ON A PERCH AND PRETEND YOU'RE A RARE SOUTH AMERICAN PARROT!
WELL, I DIDN'T THINK HE'D ACTUALLY DO IT!
1-24-23

MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell

So— NOW YOU WANT TO BE CALLED "THE DUDE."
YESH.
OR "HIS DUDENESS" ..."DUDER"... ..."EL DUDERINO"
HOW ABOUT "THE DUDESTER"?
YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR ELEMENT.
1-24

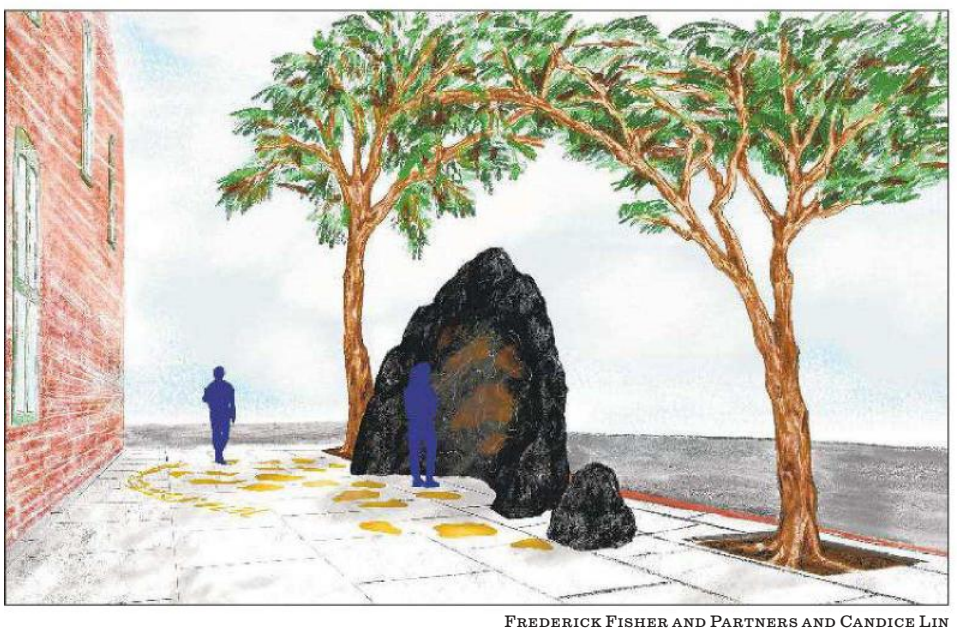
PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz

FOR "SHOW AND TELL" TODAY I HAVE BROUGHT MY PET ROCK..
MY PET ROCK IS AN EXCELLENT GOLFER... HIS FAVORITE COURSE IS "PEBBLE BEACH"!
HAHAHA!
YOU HAVE A PRETTY DULL GROUP HERE, MA'AM.

Sze Tsung Nicolás Leong and Judy Chui-Hua Chung

BANYAN trees figure in a proposal, in rendering, by Sze Tsung Nicolás Leong and Judy Chui-Hua Chung.

Finalists for massacre marker



Frederick Fisher and Partners and Candice Lin

A PLAN by Frederick Fisher and Partners and Candice Lin has a scholar's rock.

[**Memorial,** from E1]
harboring infinity mirrors, which provide the illusion of bottomlessness when viewed from above.

Sonam Lhamo, Jiawei Yao, Yiying, a team from Seattle, focused its proposal on a single location in front of the Chinese American Museum on Los Angeles Street. It was around this site — in an alley that has since been obliterated by an on-ramp to the 101 Freeway — that the violence began. The team visually unified opposite sides of the street with pavings of red brick, which would function as a visual bridge. The paved zone would connect with a red brick memorial sanctuary on one side of the street.

The concept submitted by L.A. architectural firm Frederick Fisher and Partners and artist Candice Lin also sticks to the museum site. Their proposed installation is a large-scale version of a traditional scholar's rock — formations that are placed within Chinese gardens or on wooden podiums and used as objects of contemplation. Their idea centers on a large monolith of black stone featuring carved images; 18 brass shards embedded into the pavement would mark the 18 lives lost.

A proposal by artists Anna Sew Hoy and Zhu Jia, partnering with the L.A.-based architectural studio Formation Association, likewise would unify the site in front of the Chinese American Museum — but it would achieve this through a series of vertical pillars linked to one another at the top by an undulating metallic ribbon. In the plan, each pillar marks an event in the chronology of the massacre; secondary markers also serve to indicate other important massacre sites downtown.

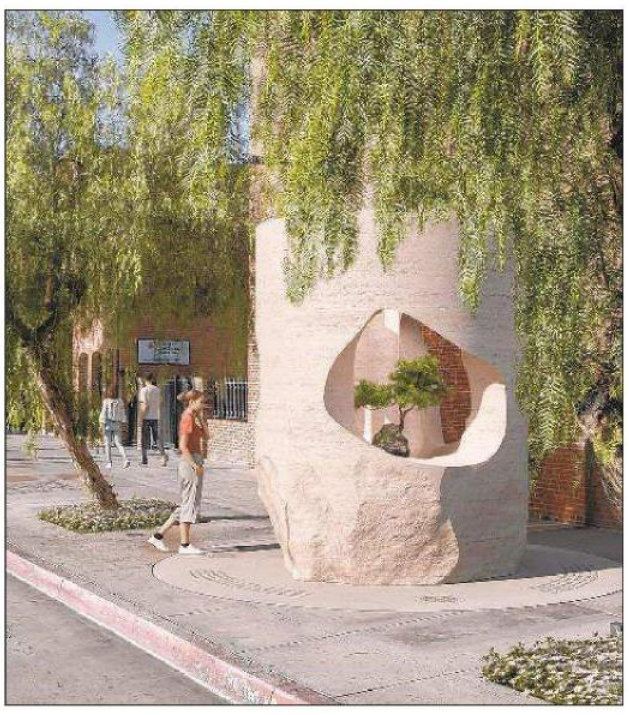
A pair of architectural studios — Figure in San Francisco and J. Jih from Boston — teamed up for a design that also draws from a traditional Chinese aesthetic practice: *penjing*, the art of creating miniaturized trees. The principal monument, a limestone cylinder, would contain a small tree as well as the names of the dead. Smaller-scale markers would be installed at other memorial sites.

For much of Los Angeles' history, the story of the massacre was absent from the city's landscape of memorials and monuments.

Finally, in 2001, the Chinese American Museum installed a sidewalk plaque commemorating the massacre.

But in recent years, there has been a push for greater recognition of one of L.A.'s most violent episodes, which was part of a wave of anti-Chinese violence and legislation in the 19th century.

Next month, the design teams will formally present their proposals to the public via Zoom. A date and time for that event has not yet been set, but future updates — along with illustrated presentation decks for all six design concepts — can be found on the department's website at *culturela.org*.



JENNI Figure x J. Jih

A MEMORIAL envisioned by Figure and J. Jih would incorporate the Chinese aesthetic practice of *penjing.*

Cale's classic collabs

[**Cale,** from E1]
folk experimentalist Weyes Blood. Cale casts a long shadow on a younger generation of musicians who traverse musical boundaries.

"Cale brought drone-y dread to the Velvet Underground," says singer and violinist Andrew Bird, who has covered Cale's 1973 song "Andalucia." "And his solo albums are an inspiration to anyone who believes pop music can deliver on thrills and still hit you with unexpected depth."

Even when Cale was young, he sounded old: world-weary, skeptical, paranoid. On "Mercy's" 12 chilly, unhurried songs, he reminisces about his friend David Bowie ("Night Crawling") and his Velvet Underground bandmate and former lover Nico ("Moonstruck"), who died in 1988, and links sound to memory on an extraordinary highlight, "The Noise of You."

John Davies Cale was born in a rural Wales village where his father worked in the mines, "a soul-destroying job," Cale has said. His doting mother signed him up to study classical piano when he was 7, and Cale proved a prodigy, learning viola and bass in addition to piano. He won a scholarship to study modern composition at Tanglewood in Massachusetts, where his music was deemed too aggressive, and soon found surer footing in New York City, where he performed with avant-garde deity La Monte Young and formed the Velvet Underground with Lou Reed, Sterling Morrison and Maureen Tucker. "We decided that we were gonna do things nobody could figure out," he later wrote.

Even at 80, Cale remains a self-described "trickster," and during a recent Zoom call from the voice-over booth of his recording studio in L.A., he spoke obliquely about his recent landmark birthday, his influential cover of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" and why he was fired from the Velvet Underground.

Seven of the 12 songs on "Mercy" have collaborators, and you've collaborated a lot over your career. What makes someone a good collaborator?

Collaborators always show me something new. It's a welcome injection of ideas. You open a Pandora's box. Let me look inside that box. Let me tickle the keys here and see what happens.

Who's a collaborator you've learned from?

La Monte Young was one of them. I came to New York in 1963 to meet La Monte and work with him. I had managed to get a few phone numbers for La Monte, John Cage and Aaron Copland, and I went about meeting the musicians who would open my eyes to some things. Even around the fringe of that avant-garde group, there was someone who had their own ideas of how things should run.

Even though there are different collaborators, the songs on "Mercy" still have a consistent sound, which I'd describe as slow and soft, but also decayed and wintry. Does that description resonate with you?

Yeah. I welcome the wintry idea, because my favorite song on the album, "The Noise of You," reminds me of Prague in winter. I don't know what more I can say except that some of the collaborators paid attention to previous collaborators that aren't with us anymore. One is Nico. I was surprised that it had taken me so long to pay attention to her style.

In "Moonstruck," the "Mercy" song about Nico, you sing, "I've come to make my peace." Is there literalism in that? Did you not make peace with her before she died?

It seemed appropriate for me to say something less abstract than I did in some of the other lyrics on the record. The song is affectionate. I showed Nico some respect. People have suddenly realized how effective her songs were. I was hoping that somehow, Nico's son, Ari, would get to read the lyrics as well, because he had a rough time of it.

"The Noise of You" struck me first as a song about mourning or loss, but is it also about how sound relates to memory?

Well, *there's* a topic. It does, and as hard as I try not to relate one sound to an environment or history, it's a good thing to have in the mix. It's a very attractive emotion, to have shadows of past experiences coming down on you.

People more often think of taste and smell as the sensory keys to memory. For you, it's sound?

Yes, always. It's either sounds from memories or memories from sounds. It's a collision of emotions. The idea of collisions in music is really useful for a composer.

"Night Crawling" is a song about nocturnal adventures with David Bowie. One of the lines is "I can't even tell when you're putting me on." Was that true of your relationship with Bowie?

Yes, and it describes his relationship with me also.

Why do you think he couldn't tell when you were putting him on?

I'm just being careful. I'm hedging my bets.

In the song, or in life?

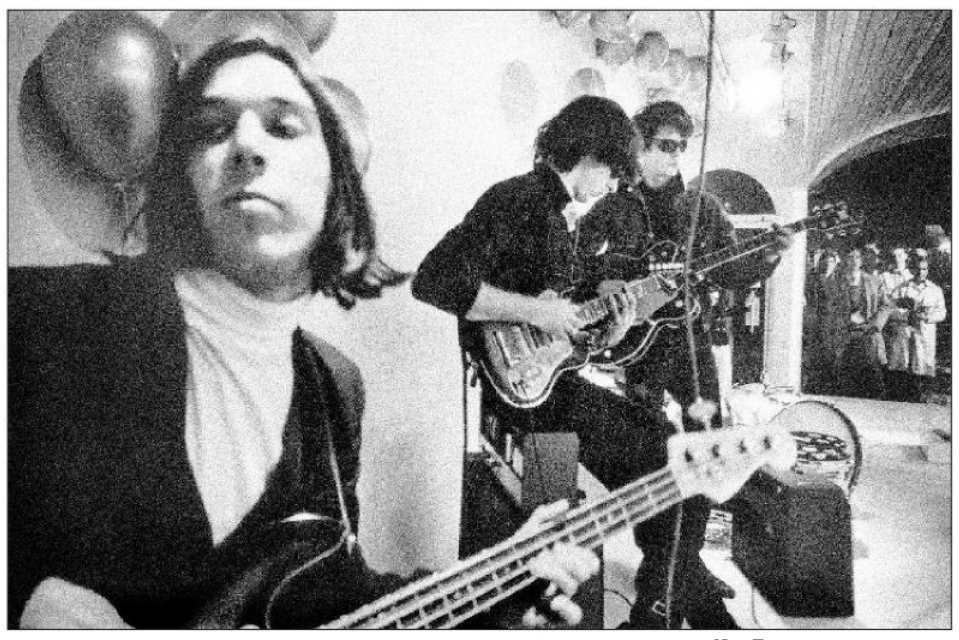
Both.

A new Lou Reed album came out a few months ago, "Words & Music, May 1965." It's you and Lou doing very folk-rock demos of "I'm Waiting for the Man" and "Heroin," among other songs. At what point did you and he start incorporating aggression and atonality?

I think that started in '65. See, I met Lou and I got the impression that the songs he was writing contained a lot of honest, argumentative positions, and that was important to me. I was more interested in that than in the folk side. That's where I got the idea that the strength of Bob Dylan's prose was also possible with Lou. I don't like to say that, because Lou's style was his own — sacrosanct.

I'd run back and forth to London, see my old friends from college and ask what was going on in music. They unloaded a whole bag of, like, the early Who, Daddy Longlegs, Small Faces. I came back to New York and said, "Lou, we've got to wake up! These guys are doing what we should be doing. What are we waiting for?" I guess that's one of the things that came back to haunt me.

What do you mean?



Nat Finkelstein Apple TV+

THE VELVET UNDERGROUND'S John Cale, from left, Sterling Morrison and Lou Reed. Cale was a co-founder of the band but departed after two albums.

Domino via AP

"MERCY" is Cale's first album of new songs since 2012. It sounds wintry.

Later on, it was pointed out to me by somebody in our group — it may have been our manager, but let's not mention his name — that I was not a straight shooter. I was not welcome in the band anymore as a representative of the avant-garde. I said, "Now is not the time to back off from what we've done." They said I was pushing it too far. So I backed off quietly.

Have you listened to the third and fourth Velvet Underground albums, and what do you think of them?

I probably listened to them a couple of times and didn't listen to them again. It was important to me to get more songwriting done, produce some bands and focus on the future.

Do you know that thanks in part to your 1991 cover of "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen, it's become one of the most covered songs of the last 20 years?

Yeah. The song was mysterious enough that I really had to grab Leonard and say, "Can you send me the lyrics?" He said, "Sure." So I got the lyrics, which took up an entire roll of thermal fax machine paper. The song had 15 verses in it. I thought, "God, thanks a lot, Leonard. *Too* welcome!"

What was it about the song that resonated with you?

One thing was that I had a choice. I told Leonard, "There are certain verses here that I can't wrap my head around. They're not something I feel confident about being sincere." He said, "Just take what you need." That reminds me of a commercial on TV that's really obnoxious — some guy who has an emu running around after him. Do you know the guy I mean?

Yes, it's an ad for Liberty Mutual insurance. "Only pay for what you need."

[laughs] That's right. I fell out of love with insurance companies.

"Hallelujah" isn't a happy song, and it's weird that it's become a ballad people cover on "American Idol."

But it's also a song that people can take as being a moral corrective. It's not too often that you come across a song that will crawl under your skin and sit there and watch you. The way Leonard does things is very smooth.

The first time I saw you perform, there was a real feeling of menace. Someone in the crowd threw a bottle at the stage and I thought there might be a riot. That suggests to me that when you sing about the violent nature of humanity, that topic can't be contained. You're not in control of it.

Yes, that's true. And I never try to contain it. I've always tried to hold it up like a specimen in a jar and say, "Now look at this!" or "*Listen* to this!" I'd rather have an idea of what's disturbing in the jar than not.

I'm always suspicious when I hear about rock musicians who have classical training, because they're usually terrible rock musicians. What use was your classical training in playing rock?

Totally useless! But I didn't see classical training as an endpoint. I saw it as a place to scramble. If you want to be a chef and you go to this one guy who does all sorts of weird cooking, out of it all comes your inquisitiveness. There is as much in a listener as there is in a composer. I hope that's clear.

So the composer doesn't exist without the listener?

Yes.

You turned 80 last year. What did you do to celebrate?

[pause] Well, I can say I had a cookie.

You really splurged, huh?

Oh man, you should have seen me. [laughs]

Seventy-nine years without a cookie, and then bang! A cookie.

That's it! The worst f— fate for anybody: no cookies. I then went on to doughnuts.